

IOWA BIRD LIFE

IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION



Summer 2007 . Volume 77 . Number 3



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The Iowa Ornithologists' Union, founded in 1923, encourages interest in the identification, study, and protection of birds in Iowa and seeks to unite those who have these interests in common. Iowa Bird Life and IOU News are quarterly publications of the Union.

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Meet Two Iowa Birders— Dick and Sharon Stilwell

Robert I. Cecil

For several years, Sharon Stilwell didn't realize that she was a birder. That fact was finally brought to her attention by a business associate who knew that she and her husband Dick had been to Rockport, Texas to see Whooping Cranes on the now-famous trips led by "Captain Ted" on his boat *Skimmer*. And then they had returned later to the hummingbird festival where thousands of hummers amass



on the Texas Coast in preparation for their nonstop flight across the Gulf of Mexico. But there were other clues. When she and Dick met in 1979, they brought together their interest in the natural world including plants as well as birds. Soon after marriage in 1981, Dick gave his new wife a *Golden Guide to Birds* after discovering Common Redpolls at their feeders. She was still too new to birding to realize that the species was a bit unusual for Iowa.

Their mutual interest in birding had vague beginnings. Dick, born in West Des Moines in 1936, spent much of his youth exploring the nearby woods and fields that have now been transformed into homes and businesses. He pursued his interests at Iowa State University while majoring in forestry but then transferred to Drake University to major in botany and pharmacy before settling on chemistry. It landed him a position at Maytag in Newton where he variously became Director of Engineering Services, liaison to the appliance industry organization, and founding member of the Industry Advisory Council to the Iowa State University Materials Science Department. Following retirement but well before Maytag's departure from Newton, he and Sharon decided to go birding and exploring on a more global scale.

Sharon was born in 1944 in Springfield, MO. Her first recorded interest in birding was a photo taken when she was eleven months old, climbing an old wooden ladder to see her uncle's fancy pigeons. Her "best friend" as a child was her grandfather who never stopped calling her "son" and taught her about the plants in the garden and the surrounding countryside. Although she had an ongoing interest and affection for plants and animals, she decided to attend the University of Missouri at Columbia and major in home economics. Following graduation, Meredith Publishing drew her to Des Moines where she worked for 29 years before retirement, in time becoming director of the test kitchen where recipes are refined and then written and photographed for many of Meredith's publications.

Although she continues to manage major cook book projects on a freelance basis, she and Dick have put their passion for travel first. On their early trip to Texas to see Whooping Cranes and hummingbirds they heard their first "pish." They also learned an important lesson about how to *not* look like a new birder. "Beat up your field guide a little so folks think you've been around. A passenger on the trip pointed to our field guide and said, 'Brand new field guide. You all must be brand new to birding too.'" They then went to Arizona to see more hummers, and next decided to head to Costa Rica where, they understood, there were loads of them. Since Sharon still remembered some Spanish from high school, they set out for San Jose on their own in 1986. After three days of birding around the capital, uncertain about how to get farther afield, they finally made their way to Rancho Naturalista. "A magical place," Sharon recalls, offering them their first real taste of tropical birding, replete with motmots, trogons, toucans, a nesting colony of Montezuma Oropendulas, and dazzling numbers and species of hummingbirds. One of the special highlights was a pool in a stream where hummingbirds come to bathe throughout the day. In two subsequent trips to Costa Rica, they have visited the country's most famed birding areas and, of course, have seen the country's most famous bird, the Resplendent Quetzal. While they have continued to bird actively in Iowa and the United States, they succumbed to the unquenchable lure of the tropics. As Sharon noted, she needs a Costa Rica fix right now.

Their travels have now taken them to Oaxaca and Colima in Mexico, Belize, Panama, Trinidad and Tobago, Ecuador, Chile, Brazil, Peru, and, barely, Argentina. Closer to home, they have birded Arizona, California, Ohio, Florida, Maine, and the Northwest Territories of Canada, although on the latter trip they got in lots of excellent fishing because birds proved to be scarce. Their first and only trip so far out of the hemisphere was a visit to England on a garden trip where Dick was especially enchanted with the Common Cuckoo. Their travel has thus far netted Sharon a world bird list of "a little under 1,800." Dick has been less involved in listing the species they have seen, preferring instead to chronicle his trips with his camera and digital video recorder.

Those who have seen Dick's trip photos and his video programs can attest to the level of skill he has attained. He has had entries in all recent IOU photo contests and provided a luminous photo of a Prothonotary Warbler for the cover of the Summer 2004 *Iowa Bird Life*. Dick has developed his photography skills since his early youth when he inherited an Argus C-3 Camera. He later got a Leica Rangefinder camera, followed by his first single lens reflex camera, a Pentax Spotmatic. More active birding moved him through the latest technologies, and he now photographs with a Canon 20D and a Canon high-definition digital video camera. Dick's skill at shooting and editing video programs was a bit more of a

challenge; he admitted that learning it involved a lot of “blankety-blank blanks!” One early mistake was the purchase of a video camera with a black and white monitor that saved him \$100 over the color version, but was useless for spotting tropical birds in jungle foliage. The computer memory requirements for video are staggering, he noted, with a single hour at low resolution using 14 gigabytes. His most recent video is a sumptuous program on their latest trip to Brazil, shown recently to the Des Moines Audubon group as well as the Big Bluestem Audubon. Sharon also gets in a little photography; for example, her close-up digiscoped photos of leg bands of the nesting Peregrine Falcons in downtown Des Moines, proving the species practices bigamy since the same male had two mates. They also observed that Yellow-billed Cuckoos were a significant prey species, judging by the dead ones observed around the nest site.

Their involvement with the IOU began in 1994. While at Meredith, Sharon met Jim Sinclair who is the executive caterer for Meredith Corporation and who was also on the IOU Membership Committee. Jim convinced her to join with Dick, and they later attended their first meeting in Mason City. Jim and Beth Brown introduced them to other members including Mark and Beth Proescholdt, who, in turn, recognized Sharon’s leadership and organizational skills and willingness to serve. Sharon was elected to the IOU Board of Directors in 2001, followed by a two-year term as vice president where she excelled at setting up spring and fall meetings. Two years later, she became IOU’s president. Her major accomplishments include working with Ann Johnson, IOU website guru, in placing the organization’s constitution, bylaws, operational guidance, meeting registration, and membership services on <www.iowabirds.org>. She also worked with others on the effort to place all old *Iowa Bird Life* journals in a searchable on-line format, making their vast information available to casual students and scholars alike. Sharon declined to accept a second term as president, feeling that six years was both enjoyable and enough, and besides, the job was in excellent hands with successor John Rutenbeck.

Between them, Dick and Sharon have four children: Sharon’s twin girls and Dick’s son and daughter, plus seven grandchildren who entertain them with their occasional mispronunciation of birds’ names. Favorites include “Great Blue Herring” for “that fishing bird” the Great Blue Heron, “ant bird” for cormorant, and “woodknocker” for woodpecker. Another favorite moment was when a three-year-old granddaughter announced that the birds at the feeder matched the ones in the Audubon beginner bird guide Sharon had given her. “There may yet be hope for a birder in the family,” Sharon said. Their West Des Moines home, an unexpected Eden nestled into a small woodland just off E. P. True Parkway, offers the grandchildren an opportunity to enjoy the outdoors, and provides Dick and Sharon with full time employment in maintaining its gardens and bird feeders. In the 20 years they have lived there, they have seen 102 bird species, of which the most notable were Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, Whip-poor-will, a Sedge Wren that moved into their backyard prairie patch, Varied Thrush, Northern Mockingbird, Summer and Scarlet Tanagers, Spotted Towhee, and Evening Grosbeak. A leucistic American Robin has also been visiting the yard for four years, evidently not as easy a target for predators as they had expected.

While Dick and Sharon are retired and are now out from under the responsibilities of service to the IOU, they expect that life will be no less busy. There are more travel plans—returning to Brazil and perhaps an Africa trip, although now Sharon is preparing

for a busy freelance job as project manager in assembling five cookbooks of recipes by Wal-Mart employees. They are members of the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, the American Bird Conservancy, the American Birding Association, the National Audubon Society, the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, and Des Moines Audubon where Dick has served as president. They will be continuing to help take fourth graders on field trips sponsored by the Polk County Conservation Board. Each winter Dick and Sharon also volunteer at National Audubon's Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary, now about 13,000 acres with a two-mile elevated boardwalk through the swamp containing the largest stand of old growth cypress trees in South Florida—some are over 600 years old. They volunteer as boardwalk naturalists, helping visitors understand what they are seeing and answering one of their favorite questions with "Yes, the alligators are real." In addition to volunteering at Corkscrew, they have been asked to volunteer on the wildlife drive at Ding Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island in a similar capacity. While they stayed in Florida for three months last year, they don't plan on leaving Des Moines. And that is very good news for the Iowans who have benefited from their service and appreciated their talents.

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Field Reports—Spring 2007

Matthew C. Kenne



Matthew C. Kenne

WEATHER

While at times it seemed like spring was never going to come to northern Iowa, in the end, the 2007 spring season went into the records as the 14th warmest and 11th wettest in 135 years.

It began, however, with an old-fashioned blizzard over the western half of the state through 3 March. This storm followed another heavy snowstorm by only a week, and together they left two feet of snow over much of northern Iowa. Temperatures increased to above normal after the 8th and stayed above, with Keosauqua reaching 80 degrees by the 13th and Sioux City seeing 84 on the 26th. Warm temperatures melted the last of the deep snow by 22 March.

April turned sharply colder, but continued to be wet-

ter. Daytime highs didn't surpass freezing for some areas in the north on 4 and 6 April, and widespread late snow occurred on the 10th and 11th, with 10 inches being reported from Dickinson County. Like March, the second half of April was again warmer than average, with 90 degree temperatures reaching the northwest on the 29th and 30th. Rainfall averaging almost three inches fell statewide 22–26 April. This rain fell on top of earlier snowmelt and increased stream flooding across central and western parts of the state.

May temperatures averaged almost five degrees above normal, with a mid-month hot spell in the 90s lasting from the 11th to the 14th. Western and southwestern Iowa received the bulk of two flooding rain systems 5–7 and 23–24 May. While localized seven-inch rains were reported from these storms, the eastern end of the state received little precipitation. It was the 6th driest May at Dubuque in 153 years of record-keeping, whereas Red Oak received 12.5 inches of rain during the month.

HABITAT, GENERAL TRENDS

Unlike recent spring migrations, when ducks and geese were common in mid-February, waterfowl (besides Mallards and Canada Geese) didn't begin filling the state until the March post-blizzard warm-up. Once uncommon in eastern Iowa, large flocks of Greater White-fronted Geese in Johnson and Louisa Counties added to the impression of a modern migration route shift. Most ducks, with notable exceptions of Ruddy Ducks and Cinnamon Teal, were seen in normal numbers. Shorebird habitat was quick to change this spring, as melting snows and heavy rains changed conditions repeatedly through the season. A good variety of shorebirds could be found at different times and locations, but large gatherings were few and short-lived.

Now that the spread of Eurasian Collared-Doves through Iowa is probably complete, it will be interesting to see what kind of density they will reach. And what does the expansion of White-winged Doves have in store for our state? The Scissor-tailed Flycatcher is another species that may be on the upswing in Iowa, with the three birds this spring equaling all of last year's visitors. The surge of warmth after the March blizzard brought with it many Eastern Phoebe and Tree Swallows again this year, continuing the apparent trend of climate-induced early arrivals. Whether this year's influx of Yellow-breasted Chats is the start of a trend, climate or otherwise, will have to be determined later.

Inclement weather often causes migration fallout that result in bird-finding on another scale. Cruising roads after snowstorms in early March and early April, birders found species such as Horned Larks, Vesper Sparrows, and Smith's and Lapland Longspurs grounded in unusually large numbers. Likewise, May rains led to the grounding of neotropical migrants. The rainy weekend of 5–7 May was a large birding event that could be measured in several ways: 5 May was a banding day on the Bob Van Ervelde farm in Poweshiek Co. They banded 213 birds in an eight hour period, double their previous high, indicating lots of movement ahead of the storms. After the storms on 6 May, I had 21 species of warblers in Kossuth Co., the Sparkman's, had 21 species in Polk Co., and the Chris Caster and Chris Edwards had 28 species in SE Iowa. Many thrush and warbler first arrivals and high numbers were recorded 5 and 6 May, and heavy outgoing movement was noted in central Iowa the evenings of 7 and 8 May. Finally, note the increase in Spotted Towhees brought from the west by the storms.

UNUSUAL SPECIES

Accidental and Casual species that have been confirmed this spring season by the Records Committee included Black-bellied Whistling Ducks at two locations, lingering Harlequin Ducks, Glossy Ibis in central Iowa, King Rail, a very early Whimbrel, Iceland Gull and Great Black-backed Gull at the Mississippi River, White-winged Dove again, Rock Wren, Bewick's Wren, Prairie Warblers in addition to the returning Linn County bird, two male Western Tanagers, and a very familiar Painted Bunting. Some other notable birds were a Greater Prairie Chicken in the west, two Pacific Loons, a Yellow Rail, a Black-necked Stilt, Buff-breasted Sandpipers, Barn Owl in Decatur County, a late Snowy Owl, Scissor-tailed Flycatchers, Varied Thrushes, Pine Warblers, and Common Redpolls. A European Goldfinch, an exotic cage bird in this country but widely reported in the recent past, was photographed in late April at the feeder of Paulette Lugg of Ventura.

SPECIES DATA

All CAPS = Casual or Accidental species. * = documented. County names are in italics. Full names of contributors are at the end of the article. Abbreviations used: **A** = area, **Cr** = Creek, **Isl** = island, **L** = lake, **L&D** = lock and dam, **M** = marsh, **m.ob.** = many observers, **NA** = nature area, **NWR** = national wildlife refuge, **P** = park, **Pr** = prairie, **R** = river, **RA** = recreation area, **Res** = reservoir, **SF** = state forest, **Sl** = slough, **SP** = state park, **USNWR** = Union Slough National Wildlife Refuge, **WCCB** = Winnebago County Conservation Board, **WPA** = waterfowl production area, **WA** = wildlife area.

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING DUCK: There were two records of this increasingly common species: 6 May at L Manawa *Pottawattamie* (*KDy), and 6 at a farm pond near Mt. Pleasant *Henry* 27 May–4 June (Dick Peterson-photo).

Greater White-fronted Goose: Flocks of 1,000–2,000 were widespread 8–10 Mar *Marion*, *Page*, *Appanoose*, *Polk*, *Louisa*, and *Johnson* (AB, KDy, RLC, BSc, CRE), although they didn't reach the northern border until the end of the month (45 on 1 Apr at Cardinal M *Winneshiek*, DC). Last: 18 May at Big Wall L *Wright* (SJD) and 28 May at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO).

Snow Goose: Similar to Greater White-fronted, Snow Geese began arriving in numbers after the blizzard melted away (15,000 on 9 Mar at Pierce Cr *Page*, KDy). By 14 Mar, 65,000 were at Riverton WA *Fremont* (SJD). Larger later reports included 5,000 on 29 Mar *Kossuth* (Craig Zoellner fide PH) and 9,000 on 17 Apr at South Twin L *Calhoun* (SSP). The last big concentration was 940 at Dan Green Slough *Clay* 28 Apr (LAS), and the final 2 were at Colo Ponds *Story* 29–31 May (HZ).

Ross's Goose: Many small groups of less than 50 were found migrating with Snow Geese Mar and Apr. Most: 3,200 on 14 Mar at Riverton WA *Fremont* (SJD) dwarfed the only other large flock of 186 on 17 Apr at South Twin L *Calhoun* (SSP). One *Story* 15 May was late (SSP, KLP), but the last was 30 May *Polk* (AB) [record latest].

Cackling Goose: The first may have weathered the blizzard in Iowa: 30 on 3 Mar at Shenandoah *Page* (KDy), 52 on 5 Mar *Decatur* (JRL), and 50 on 5 Mar at Dunbar Slough *Greene* (SSP). Most: 180 on 10 Mar at Runnells WA *Polk* (AB). Last: 6 May at Shenandoah (KDy) and 11 May at Dunbar Slough (SJD, JG).

Mute Swan: Single lingering winter birds were found 4 and 10 Mar *Scott* (DR, AMJ) and 10 Mar *Lee* (DP). Sightings *Boone*

19 Mar and 9 Apr (JHW) probably refer to the same bird.

Trumpeter Swan: The entire flock of 26 on 10 Mar at Runnells WA *Polk* was unmarked (AB, JG).

Tundra Swan: Most: 200 around the power plant at Lansing *Allamakee* 5 Mar (SBW). The only other report was of a single 19 Mar at L&D 14 *Scott* (SMF).

Gadwall: Ten made it to Rice L *Worth* by 10 Mar (PH). Most: 965 on 6 Apr at Sunken Grove WA *Pocahontas* (SSP) and 730 on 17 Apr at South Twin L *Calhoun* (SSP). Last: 5 on 27 May at USNWR *Kossuth* (MCK).

American Wigeon: First: 6 Mar at Shenandoah *Page* (KDY) and 2 on 6 Mar at L Rathbun *Appanoose* (DT). Most: 325 at Sandhill L *Woodbury* 7 Apr (BFH). Last: singles 15 May at both Colo Ponds *Story* (KLP, SSP) and Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (DP).

American Black Duck: The first report was of an American Black Duck x Mallard hybrid 4 Mar at Red Rock Res *Marion* (JG, AB). Ten additional birds were seen at 6 locations south and east from the last on 27 Mar at Bjorkboda M *Hamilton* (JHW).

Blue-winged Teal: First: 10 Mar *Lee* (DP) and 2 on 10 Mar at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (CRE). Most: 1,464 on 8 Apr at Riverton WA *Fremont* (SJD) and 4,000 on 12 Apr at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (GLV).

Cinnamon Teal: All drakes: 8 Apr at Riverton WA *Fremont* (SJD, JG), 10–13 Apr at L Manawa *Pottawattamie* (LJP, BKP, POR, RIA-photo, PHA), 2 from 13–21 Apr at Jester P *Polk* (m.ob.), 19 Apr at Myre Sl *Winnebago* (CJF), 22 Apr at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (SJD), and 23 Apr–9 May at Chichaqua WA *Polk* (SSP, KLP, NAO).

Northern Shoveler: First: 10 Mar in both *Lee* (DP) and *Appanoose* (RLC). Most: 3,700 on 8 Apr at Riverton WA *Fremont* (SJD). Central Iowa peak numbers were lower: 595 on 6 Apr at Sunken Grove WA

Pocahontas (SSP) and 500 on 22 Apr at Banner WA *Warren* (AB, JS). A possible nesting pair was at Ketelsen Greenwing M *Story* 29 May (SSP).

Northern Pintail: First, and the most reported: 200 on 10 Mar at Sedan Bottoms *Appanoose* (RLC).

Green-winged Teal: First: 10 Mar at Heron Bend *Lee* (DP). Most: 916 on 14 Mar at Riverton WA *Fremont* (SJD).

Canvasback: Most: 400 on 10 Mar at the Mississippi R *Scott* (WMZ) and 220 on 21 Mar at USNWR *Kossuth* (MCK). The last report was a single 22 May at Ledges SP *Boone* (JHW).

Redhead: The first reported from the north were 35 on 10 Mar at Rice L *Worth* (PH). Most: 200 on 13 Mar at Riverton WA *Fremont* (LJP, BKP). A lone drake remained at USNWR *Kossuth* 27 May (MCK).

Ring-necked Duck: First: 15 on 4 Mar below the dam at Saylorville Res *Polk* (JB). Most: 2,300 on 14 Mar at Riverton WA *Fremont* (SJD). Central Iowa peaks included 650 on 17 Mar at Dean *Appanoose* (RLC) and 915 on 6 Apr at Sunken Grove WA *Pocahontas* (SSP). A pair remained at USNWR *Kossuth* 27 May (MCK).

Greater Scaup: The first inland migrants were 4 on 7 Mar *Decatur* (NJM). Thirty additional birds were reported from twelve locations from all areas except the NW and NE, with the last pair 27 Apr at Sunken Grove WA *Pocahontas* (SSP).

Lesser Scaup: 2,460 scaup were ready to go 9 Mar at L&D 14 *Scott* (AB). Most: 2,760 on 23 Mar at Red Rock Res *Marion* (AB). Later and farther north, 1,200 were at Sunken Grove WA *Pocahontas* 17 Apr (SSP). Last: 19 May at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (JHW).

HARLEQUIN DUCK: The 2 males from the winter season at L&D 14 *Scott* remained until 5 Apr (m.ob.)

Surf Scoter: All: an ad drake 24 Mar at L Rathbun *Appanoose* (RLC) and an imm drake 6 Apr along Hwy 20 *Grundy* (SJD).

Long-tailed Duck: All: a male 4–8 Mar at L&D 14 *Scott* (DP, DR, SMF), possibly the same male 11 Mar at Davenport (JG, SJD), a fem 11 Mar at LeClaire *Scott* (DR), a male 12–18 Apr at Roland sewage ponds *Story* (KRW, WO, DAK, RIA, PHA, HZ), and a male 16 Apr at Little Wall L *Hamilton* (SSP, KLP).

Bufflehead: Most: 65 on 6 Apr at Sunken Grove WA *Pocahontas* (SSP). Two drakes were still at Sunken Grove 18 May (SJD).

Common Goldeneye: Most: 300 were counted 10 Mar between L&D 14 and LeClaire *Scott* (WMZ). Last: a drake 28 May *Marshall* (MPr).

Hooded Merganser: A hen with 9 young 31 May at Port Neal *Woodbury* was the first local nesting (BFH, POR).

Common Merganser: Most: 296 on 16 Mar below Saylorville dam *Polk* (JB). Last: a hen 15 May at L Macbride *Johnson* (JLF, THK).

Red-breasted Merganser: First: 14 on 5 Mar *Decatur* (JRL). Most: 245 on 13 Apr at Clear L *Cerro Gordo* (PH). The last was a hen keeping company with the Common Merganser 15 May at L Macbride *Johnson* (THK, JLF).

Ruddy Duck: First: there were no reports between 4 Mar at L&D 14 *Scott* (DP) and 10 Mar at Rice L *Worth* (PH). Later, huge rafts of ruddies gathered on central Iowa lakes: 1,050 on 5 Apr at Little Wall L *Hamilton* and 1,200 at Sunken Grove WA *Pocahontas* (both SSP). Last: 48 still at US-NWR *Kossuth* 27 May (MCK) and 2 drakes displaying to a hen at Colo Ponds *Story* 31 May (HZ).

Gray Partridge: This species is doing well in nw Iowa (LAS); and reports of up

to 13 from *Boone*, *Story*, *Hardin*, *Grundy*, *Tama*, and *Polk* (LGD, JHW, HZ, MPr, AB, SJD) indicate strength at the southern edge of their range.

Ruffed Grouse: All: 23 Mar at Yellow R SF *Allamakee* (DP) and 3, 28 May at Stephens SF *Lucas* (AB, JG).

Greater Prairie-Chicken: Most: 22 on 1 Apr at Kellerton Grasslands BCA *Ringgold* (DTh). One thought to be from the expanding population to Iowa's west was seen 19 May *Plymouth* (*SJD, *JG).

Northern Bobwhite: Reports outlined a range adjacent to that of Gray Partridge: from Sioux City *Woodbury*, to *Madison*, to *Tama* and *Linn*. Most: 25 on 1 Apr *Decatur* (NJM).

Pacific Loon: All: 10 May at a quarry near Sioux Center *Sioux* (Ken Hollinga fide JVD-details), and 18–27 May at MidAmerican Ponds *Pottawattamie* (*BSc).

Common Loon: First: 22 Mar *Polk* (JB) and at Pleasant Cr RA *Linn* (BSc). They were early to north Iowa 25 Mar at Dewey's Pasture *Clay* (LAS) and Clear L *Cerro Gordo* (PH). The peak of 177 was at Clear L 13 Apr (RGo, PH), after which only a handful of birds remained around the state. Last: 28 May at both Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO, Diane Lowry-photo) and Clear L (CJF).

Pied-billed Grebe: The first migrants were 9 Mar at L&D 14 *Scott* (AB) and 2 on 12 Mar at New L *Woodbury* (POR). Most: 18 on 16 Apr at Little Wall L *Hamilton* (SSP, KLP). Two nests were at Colo Ponds *Story* 20 May (HZ).

Horned Grebe: First: singles were found 10 Mar in both *Lee* and *Scott* (DP, WO, AMJ). Most: 13 on 24 Mar at L Rathbun *Appanoose* (RLC), 11 on 8 Apr at both Little Wall L *Hamilton* and Ada Hayden P *Story* (SSP, KLP), and 11 on 14 Apr at Clear L *Cerro Gordo* (PH). Last: 19 May at Snyder's Bend *Woodbury* (POR).

Red-necked Grebe: All: 2 Apr at George Wyth SP *Black Hawk* (MWJ), 4 Apr at Maffitt Res *Dallas* (JG, AB), 2 on 13 Apr at Clear L *Cerro Gordo* (PH, RGo), 14 Apr at Virgin L *Palo Alto* (LAS), 24 Apr at Polk City WA *Polk* (JG), 3 May at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (GLV), and 21 May at Grover's L *Dickinson* (NPB).

Eared Grebe: First: 22 Mar at Easter L *Polk* (BN). 1–3 were found in thirteen additional counties until the last 18 May at Tomahawk M *Sac* (RLC).

Western Grebe: All: 24–26 Apr at Coralville Res *Johnson* (DP, CJC, CRE), 8 May at Virgin L *Palo Alto* (LAS), 23–26 May at Banner Wetlands *Warren* (AB, JS, RIA, PHA, JG, WO), and 31 May at Mallard M *Cerro Gordo* (PH, RGo, CJF).

American White Pelican: First: 7 on 7 Mar at L&D 14 *Scott* (DR). Most: 1,500 on 11 Apr at Easter L *Polk* (BN). Last: 110 still lingered at Riverton WA *Fremont* 29 May (KDy).

Double-crested Cormorant: First migrants: 56 on 11 Mar at LeClaire *Scott* (DR). Most: 1,800 on 11 Apr on Des Moines R at Des Moines *Polk* (AB).

American Bittern: First: 28 Mar *Fremont* (KDy) [ties second earliest]. They were reported from fifteen additional counties from only the southern 2/3rds of the state, with the most: 6 on 10 and 12 May at Harrier M *Boone* (RES, LGD, DCH), 7 on 10 May at Snake Cr M *Greene* (TL), and 7 on 8 and 20 May at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (GLV, TLu).

Least Bittern: All: 8 and 24 May at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (CJC, JLF), 12 May at Cedar Falls *Black Hawk* (MWJ), 19–20 May at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (KDy, RGo, JHW, BFH, TLu), and 2 on 26 May at South Sycamore Bottoms *Johnson* (CJC, MHB, DP).

Great Blue Heron: First: 4 Mar at

Credit Isl *Scott* (DP) and 5 Mar near Fairfield *Jefferson* (DCP). Rookeries were active by 17 Mar at Banner Wetlands *Warren* (JG) and 24 Mar at Woodpecker M *Wayne* (RLC).

Great Egret: First: 29 Mar at Banner WA *Warren* (AB) and 30 Mar at Easter L *Polk* (BN). Most: 33 on 29 May at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy).

Snowy Egret: All: 28 Apr at Dean *Appanoose* (RLC), 29 Apr *Page* (JG), 7 May at Errington M *Polk* (RIA, PHA), and 24 May at Sandhill L *Woodbury* (GLV, POR).

Little Blue Heron: An ad was at Pintail WPA *Kossuth* 8 May (MCK).

Cattle Egret: First: 28 Mar at Shenandoah *Page* (KDy) and 29 Mar at Ames *Story* (SJD). Small numbers were found from *Johnson* west, with the most in the southwest: 21 on 20 May *Fremont* and 36 on 27 May *Mills* (both KDy).

Green Heron: First: 21 Apr at Nine Eagles SP *Decatur* (JS), 22 Apr at Ledges SP *Boone* (JHW), and 23 Apr at Chichaqua WA *Polk* (SSP).

Black-crowned Night-Heron: First: 16 Apr at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO). 1–8 were reported from *Scott*, *Page*, *Decatur*, *Harri-son*, *Woodbury*, *Greene*, *Wright*, and *Polk*.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron: All: 5 May *Warren* (JS), 2 on 27 May *Warren* (JS), and 3 on 27 May *Des Moines* (KVS).

GLOSSY IBIS: Aaron Brees found an unprecedented flock of 7 at Moeckley Pr *Polk* 7 May, and several birders were able to observe them before they left on 8 May (AB-photo, JG-photo, *CRE). Tom Kent and Ken Lowder discovered a single bird 12 May at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* that was seen by many until 16 May (THK-photo, *CRE, *DAk).

White-faced Ibis: All: 5 on 15 Apr near Sergeant Bluff *Woodbury* (POR, GLV, BFH, TLu) [ties second earliest], 2 May at

Dunbar Sl *Greene* (AB), 3 May at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (GLV), and 2 on 19 May *Woodbury* (SJD, CJC, DAK).

Turkey Vulture: First: 8 Mar at Des Moines *Polk* (RLC) and 2 on 8 Mar at Red Rock Res *Marion* (AB). Nests were found in *Decatur* (NJM) and *Johnson* (CRE).

Osprey: The first reports came from the north: 25 Mar at Tuttle L *Emmet* (Craig Zoellner fide PH) and 26 Mar at L Meyer *Winneshiek* (Larry Reis fide DC). Most: 4 on 14 Apr at Pine L SP *Hardin* (MPr).

Mississippi Kite: First: 7 May at Manti P *Fremont* (KDy-details) [ties record early]. The first at Des Moines *Polk* was seen 9 May at Ashworth P (JB) [ties second earliest], and a pair were noted 13 May (AB, JG, SJD).

Bald Eagle: Peak counts at the major reservoirs: 190 on 10 Mar at Red Rock *Marion* (JG) and 214 on 18 Mar at Saylorville *Polk* (SJD).

Northern Harrier: Most: 4 on 6 Mar at Banner WA *Warren* (AMJ), 7 on 14 Mar at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (POR), and 9 at that location 12 Apr (GLV). Three on 16 May *Emmet* and 1 on 17 May at USNWR *Kossuth* were at possible nesting areas (PH, MCK).

Sharp-shinned Hawk: Usually reported as singles, but occasional group movement was observed: 4 in one hour 19 Apr at Algona *Kossuth* (MCK) and 15 on 5 May at the Chariton Cemetery *Lucas* (JG). Last: 19 May *Plymouth* (SJD).

Cooper's Hawk: There were reports from fourteen counties, with nesting noted in *Kossuth*, *Warren*, *Decatur*, *Polk*, *Poweshiek*, and *Allamakee* (MCK, JS, NJM, SSP, DK).

Northern Goshawk: All: 5 Mar at Saylorville Res *Polk* (DK) and 13 Mar at Wau-bonsie SP *Fremont* (LJP, BKP).

Red-shouldered Hawk: All: 4, 8, and 18 Mar at George Wyth SP *Black Hawk* (ALB,

DP), 24 Mar *Fremont* (KDy), 3 Apr at Ledges SP *Boone* (SJD), 9 Apr *Greene* (JHW), 23 Apr at Luther Bridge *Boone* (SJD), 29 Apr at Donnellson Unit *Lee* (DP), 2 on 5 May at Stephens SF *Lucas* (JG), and an ad on a nest 16 May *Allamakee* (DK).

Broad-winged Hawk: First: 18 Apr at Algona *Kossuth* (MCK), 19 Apr at Camp Hantesa *Boone* (JHW), and 5 on 19 Apr at Algona (MCK). Most: 50 on 27 Apr at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (CJC), 20 on 28 Apr at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (DP), and 56 on 5 May at Chariton Cemetery *Lucas* (JG). Possible nesting birds were noted in *Polk* and *Lee* (RIC, BSc), and nesting was confirmed again at Brookside P *Story* (SSP).

Swainson's Hawk: The first were 16 on the ground 8 Apr near Farragut *Fremont* (KDy). A kettle of 3 was near Story City *Story* 27 Apr (SSP). Singles were noted in *Kossuth*, *Polk*, *Harrison*, *Osceola*, *Woodbury*, *Cass*, *Madison* (MCK, POR, JVD, TLu, SJD), with the last *Lyon* 20 May (SJD).

Red-tailed Hawk: Most: 20 on 10 Mar at Sedan Bottoms *Appanoose*, including 2 dark-morphs and a Krider's (RLC). Additional western red-tailed reports: a dark-morph 5 Mar at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (KLP, SSP), an imm Harlan's 17 Mar at Banner WA *Warren* (JG), and an ad Harlan's 12 Apr at Chichaqua WA *Polk* (AB).

Rough-legged Hawk: Most: 8 on 16 Mar at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (POR); otherwise only singles reported from twelve additional counties until the last at Big Cr SP *Polk* 14 Apr (LGD).

Golden Eagle: All: an ad 10 Mar at Grammer Grove *Marshall* (MPr), an imm 11 Mar at Waterman Cr *O'Brien* (LAS), and an imm 17 Apr *Clayton* (Byron Butler fide JB).

Merlin: Most: 6 continued winter roosting at Glendale Cemetery *Polk* 13 Mar (RIC), the last of which remained un-

til 20 Apr (JG). Eleven other individuals were seen, four of which were noted as Taiga Merlins, until 28 Apr at New Wine P *Dubuque* (CLW).

Peregrine Falcon: First migrant: 21 Apr at Coulter M *Franklin* (MPr). A dozen additional single migrants were noted, with the last at Brown's L *Woodbury* (POR) 23 May.

Prairie Falcon: All: 4 Mar at Banner WA *Warren* (JG-details), 8 Mar *Decatur* (JRL-details), and 14 Mar at Riverton WA *Fremont* (SJD-details).

Yellow Rail: One 24 Apr *Decatur* was the only report (NJM).

KING RAIL: One called repeatedly 8 May at Cumming Wetlands *Warren*, a nesting location in 2005 (*JG).

Virginia Rail: First: 16 Apr at Panicum Pr *Worth* (CJF). Most: 4 on 20 May at Snake Cr M *Greene* (DTh, RIA, PHA).

Sora: First: 31 Mar at Ames *Story* (SJD-details) [ties record early], and then not until 17 Apr at both South Sycamore Bottoms *Johnson* (MHB) and Sunken Grove WA *Pocahontas* (SSP). Most: 21 on 10 May at Snake Cr M *Greene* (TL). Possible nesters 26 May at South Sycamore Bottoms (MHB), 29 May at Ketelsen Greenwing M *Story* (SSP), 29 May at Doolittle Pr *Story* (SSP), and 31 May *Boone* (JHW) were near the southern edge of their usual range in Iowa.

Common Moorhen: All: 16 Apr at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (JLF-details) [second earliest], 4 May at Medicine Cr WA *Wayne* (AB), 9 May *Hamilton* (DTh), 11 May at Cone M *Louisa* (CRE), and 12 May at Lower Morse L *Wright* (SSP).

American Coot: First: 10 Mar *Lee* (DP) and 3 on 10 Mar at Sedan Bottoms *Appanoose* (RLC). Numbers built to humorous levels in early Apr: 8,000–11,000 were found at Sunken Grove WA *Pocahontas* "The migrant coot capital of Iowa" (SSP),

Little Wall L *Hamilton* hosted 4,000–5,000 (SSP), and 3,000 were counted at New L *Woodbury* (GLV). Some stayed to nest at Colo Ponds *Story* (HZ, SSP) and Errington M *Polk* (BE).

Sandhill Crane: The first were in ne Iowa: 7 Mar at Bakewell's Pond *Allamakee*, where 18 were found 13 Mar (FL). Fourteen were counted 26 Mar at Otter Cr M *Tama* (MPr). Singles and groups of 2 or 3 were scattered over the eastern half of the state and *Fremont* throughout the season (m.ob.), and 2 were seen 12 Apr *Cherokee* (DB).

Black-bellied Plover: First: 5 on 23 Apr at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (CRE, CJC, DP-details) [third earliest], followed at a more expected time by 8 on 9 May at Farragut *Fremont* (KDy). Most: 10 on 16 May at Farragut (KDy). In *Sac*, *Woodbury*, and *Story*, 5–6 on 18–20 May (RLC, RGo, DAK, MPr, AB). Last: 28 May at Hendrickson M *Story* (KLP, SSP).

American Golden Plover: First: 5 on 21 Mar *Woodbury* (POR). Early migrants were in the west: 24 Mar found 63 plovers *Woodbury* (POR) and 147 *Fremont* (KDy). In Apr, 115 were at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* on the 15th (BFH), while 280 in *Fremont* on the 26th were Keith Dyche's last large group. Elsewhere, flocks were reported through the rest of the season: 84 on 14 Apr *Clay* (LAS), 90 on 1 May *Kossuth* (MCK), 50 on 11 May *Cerro Gordo* (Fred Heinz fide PH), and 139 on 18 May *Pocahontas* (SJD). Last: 55 on 20 May at Colo Ponds *Story* (AB).

Semipalmated Plover: First: 5 on 22 Apr at Jester P *Polk* (BE) and 10 on 22 Apr at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (DP). Most: 43 on 18 May at Big Wall L *Wright* (SJD) and 35 on 19 May at Hawkeye WA (CRE). Last: 28 May at Hendrickson M *Story* (KLP, SSP).

Piping Plover: First: 8 Apr at DeSoto

NWR *Harrison* (JLG-details) [record early]. One to three were seen at the MidAmerican Ponds *Pottawattamie* and Port Neal Ponds *Woodbury* nesting locations (BSc, RIA, PHA, POR, BFH). Migrants were found 23 Apr at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (CRE, CJC, DP), 9 May at Farragut *Fremont* (KDy), and 26 May at L Rathbun *Appanoose* (RLC).

Black-necked Stilt: A fem was at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* 9 May (THK-photo, JLE, DP, CJC).

American Avocet: First: 14 on 14 Apr at Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD), 2 on 14 Apr *Warren* (JS), and 4 on 16 Apr at Sandhill L *Woodbury* (*TLu). Last: up to 8 were found 20 May in the flooded fields of *Woodbury* (m.ob.).

Spotted Sandpiper: First: 21 Apr at Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD), Shenandoah *Page* (KDy), and Nine Eagles SP *Decatur* (JS).

Solitary Sandpiper: First: 20 Apr in both *Fremont* (KDy) and *Decatur* (JRL). Only 7 additional birds were reported, with the last at Cedar Rapids *Linn* 8 May (DP).

Greater Yellowlegs: First: 12 Mar *Decatur* (JRL) and 13 Mar *Page* (KDy). Most: 62 on 25 Mar *Woodbury* (SJD). Last: 10 May at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (DP).

Willet: First: 23 Apr at Shenandoah *Page* (KDy), 6 on 23 Apr *Cherokee* (DB), and 6–11 on 23 Apr at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (DP, CJC, CRE). Most: 71 on 29 Apr at Shenandoah *Page* was the largest spring flock since 1986 (JG, KDy), and the next largest flock was 27 on 1 May at Sandhill L *Woodbury* (POR). Ten on 4 May at Pool Sl *Allamakee* (FL) and 10 on 7 May at the Frenchtown area *Clayton* (DAk) were notable in the northeast. Last: 19 May *Plymouth* (SJD).

Lesser Yellowlegs. First: 16 Mar *Woodbury* (GLV). Peak numbers arrived in late Apr: 200 on 23 Apr at Hawkeye WA

Johnson (CRE), 120 on 28 Apr at Dean *Appanoose* (RLC), 136 on 30 Apr at Farragut *Fremont* (KDy), and 172 on 2 May at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (SJD). Jay Gilliam obtained photos of a leucistic individual 25 May at Moeckley Pr *Polk*. Last: on 27 May at Cardinal M *Winneshieck* (DC).

Upland Sandpiper: First: 2 on 2 Apr *Decatur* (NJM-details) [second earliest] and 8 Apr at Riverton WA *Fremont* (JG, SJD). They were reported from ten additional counties.

WHIMBREL: One was record early (and a month before the recent median first-arrival date) 15–17 Apr at Coralville Res *Johnson* (*CRE, *DAK).

Hudsonian Godwit: First: 14 Apr at Dean *Appanoose* (RLC), 15 Apr at Jester P *Polk* (JG), 15 Apr at Chichaqua WA *Polk* (DTh), and 4 on 15 Apr at Cook Pond *Woodbury* (POR). Most: 35 *Fremont* 17 May (BSc). Away from the Missouri R tier of counties, only 1 or 2 were seen in six additional counties, the last at Cardinal M *Winneshieck* 29 May (DC).

Marbled Godwit: All: 16 Apr at Coralville Res *Johnson* (CRE, CJC, DP), 3 on 16 Apr at Jester P *Polk* (SJD, AB, JG), 2 on 25 Apr at Shenandoah *Page* (KDy), 15 May at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO), 6 on 17 May *Fremont* (BSc), 3 on 18 May at Tomahawk M *Sac* (RLC), 2 on 19 May at Sandhill L *Woodbury* (RGo, DAK), and 7 on 23 May *Woodbury* (POR).

Ruddy Turnstone: All: 4 from 9–13 May at Farragut *Fremont* (KDy), 2 on 16 May at Port Neal Ponds *Woodbury* (POR), 16 May at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (JWR, DP), 9 on 17 May at Hendrickson M *Story* (RIA, PHA), and 18 May at Big Wall L *Wright* (SJD).

Sanderling: All: 2 on 3 May at L Rathbun *Appanoose* (AB), 16 May at Four Mile L *Emmet* (PH, MCK), 10 and 2 on 16 and

17 May at Hendrickson M *Story* (MPr, RIA, PHA), 2 on 16 May at Port Neal Ponds *Woodbury* (POR), and 19 May *Woodbury* (CJC, POR).

Semipalmated Sandpiper: First, and the only Apr report: 22 Apr *Polk* (AB). Numbers built in mid- to late May: 136 on the 16th at Farragut *Fremont* (KDy), 150 on the 20th *Woodbury* (MCK), 122 on the 22nd at Moeckley Pr *Polk* (AB), and 120 on the 23rd at Hendrickson M *Story* (AB). Last: 14 on 31 May at Hendrickson M (SSP).

Western Sandpiper: All late singles: 22 May at Moeckley Pr *Polk* (AB-details), 25 May *Dallas* (RIA, PHA) [third latest], and 25 May *Polk* (JG-details) [third latest].

Least Sandpiper: First: 11 on 28 Mar *Fremont* (KDy), and then no further reports until 21 Apr at Dean *Appanoose* (RLC). Small numbers were reported, with a high count of 20 on 8 May at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (CJC). Last: 28 May at Hendrickson M *Story* (SSP).

White-rumped Sandpiper: First: 2 May at Voas Nature Center *Dallas* (AB). Most: There were a total of about 450 on 20 May in three flooded fields *Woodbury* (MCK), with 58 still in the area 23 May (POR). Through the central part of the state, the largest groups were 32 on 25 May *Polk* (JB) and 30 on 28 May at Hendrickson M *Story* (KLP, SSP).

Baird's Sandpiper: First: 19 Mar at Shenandoah *Page* (KDy) and 3 on 19 Mar at Port Neal Ponds *Woodbury* (POR). Most: 18 on 27 Mar *Fremont* (KDy) and 13 on 23 Apr at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (Jim Forde). Elsewhere, a maximum of 3 were found 10, 28 May at Hendrickson M *Story* (SSP, KLP).

Pectoral Sandpiper: First: 14 Mar at Riverton *Fremont* (SJD). There were large counts in both the east and west: 2,000 on 23 Apr at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (CRE) and

1,200 on 9 May *Fremont* (KDy), but counts from *Appanoose*, *Greene*, and *Polk* were 140–225 (RLC, AB, DTh). Last: 31 May at Hendrickson M *Story* (SSP).

Dunlin: First: 3 on 1 Apr *Greene* (SJD-details, AB-details) [second earliest]. Most: 19 on 9 May at Shenandoah *Page* (KDy), 20 on 16 May at Four Mile L *Emmet* (MCK), and 23 on 16 May at Hendrickson M *Story* (MPr). The final 6 were at Hendrickson M 28 May (SSP, KLP).

Stilt Sandpiper: First: 24 Apr at Harrier M *Boone* (SJD). Most: 56 on 15 May *Fremont* (KDy) and 78 on 23 May *Woodbury* (POR). Only single digits were reported elsewhere, with the last 3 on 28 May at Hendrickson M *Story* (SSP, KLP).

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: Two on 15 May at Hendrickson M *Story* (SSP, KLP) and 1 on 17 May at Colo Ponds *Story* (RIA, PHA) strayed from their usual path to our west.

Short-billed Dowitcher: First: 28 Apr at Chichaqua WA *Polk* (SSP), and some of about 100 dowitchers 28 Apr at Farragut *Fremont* were identified by voice as Short-billed (KDy). Most: 48 on 16 May at Four Mile L *Emmet* (PH, MCK). Last: 2 on 28 May at Hendrickson M *Story* (KLP, SSP).

Long-billed Dowitcher: First: 24 Mar *Fremont* (KDy). Most: 72 on 30 Apr *Dallas* were assumed to be long-billed based on date (DTh), and 121 on 1 May at Sandhill L *Woodbury* (POR) were also the last.

Wilson's Snipe: First: 3 on 11 Mar at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy) and 3 on 15 Mar *Decatur* (JRL). Most: 88 *Fremont* 27 Mar (KDy) and 50 at South Sycamore Bottoms *Johnson* 17 Apr (MHB). Last: 25 May at South Sycamore Bottoms (MHB).

American Woodcock: First: 8 Mar at Summerset Bike Trail *Warren* (JS) and 9 Mar *Decatur* (JRL). Most: 13 on 23 Mar at Red Feather Pr *Polk* (DTh). Ads with young

were found 20 Apr *Clay* (Marc Gustafson fide LAS) and 29 May at Ketelsen Green-wing M *Story* (SSP).

Wilson's Phalarope: First, all on 23 Apr: *Cherokee* (DB), at Windmill L *Taylor* (RIA, PHA), and 4 at Farragut *Fremont* (KDy). 1–8 were found at ten other locations, with the last at Cardinal M *Winneshiek* 25 May (DC).

Red-necked Phalarope: Two were at Port Neal Ponds *Woodbury* 7 May (POR) and 1 or 2 were seen by many at the IOU spring meeting 19 and 20 May *Woodbury*.

Franklin's Gull: First: 2 on 12 Mar at L Manawa *Pottawattamie* (LJP, BKP). Most: 127 on 3 Apr at New L *Woodbury* (POR), 120 on 14 Apr at L Manawa (LJP, BKP), and 122 on 23 Apr at Kellerton Grasslands *BCA Ringgold* (RIA, PHA). Last: 14 on 24 May at Sandhill L *Woodbury* (POR). Franklin's were not reported from the Pothole or Great Lakes Regions of the state where they are expected.

Bonaparte's Gull: First: 50 on 19 Mar at L&D 14 *Scott* (SMF). Most: 200 on 8 Apr at Coralville Res *Johnson* (CRE). Last: 20 May at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (JG).

Ring-billed Gull: The 215 on 4 Mar at Red Rock Res *Marion* (JG) probably arrived before the blizzard. Most: 3,000 on 12 Mar at L Manawa *Pottawattamie* (LJP, BKP) and 2,800 on 18 Mar at Coralville Res *Johnson* (CRE).

Herring Gull: Most: 140 on 8 Mar at Red Rock Res *Marion* (AB). Last: a juv 16 May at Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD).

Thayer's Gull: Up to 4 ads and 1 juv were at L&D 14 *Scott* 2–13 Mar (SMF, AB, JG, SJD). One 2nd-year was found at Red Rock Res *Marion* 10 Mar (AB).

ICELAND GULL: An ad was at L&D 14 *Scott* 2–4 Mar (*SMF).

Lesser Black-backed Gull: Combi-

nations of 2 ads, a 3rd-winter, and 2 juvs were seen at L&D 14 *Scott* 4–13 Mar (SMF, DR, JG, SJD). A late ad was at Coralville Res *Johnson* 26 Apr (CRE, CJC, DP).

Glaucous Gull: A juv was at L&D 14 *Scott* 8–11 Mar (SMF, AB, AMJ, SJD, JG, DR), and an ad was present 10 Mar (SMF, WO). A late juv was at Jester P *Polk* 15 Apr (BE, AB, JG-details) [record latest].

Great Black-backed Gull: All: a 1st-winter 10–17 Mar (*SMF, AB-photo), a different 1st-winter 11–13 Mar (*SMF), and a 2nd-year bird 23 Mar (*SMF), all at the Mississippi R *Scott*.

Least Tern: All: 2 on 18 May at MidAmerican Ponds *Pottawattamie* (BSC), 4 on 24 May at MidAmerican Ponds (RIA, PHA), and 31 May at Port Neal Ponds *Woodbury* (BFH, POR).

Caspian Tern: First: 2 on 20 Apr at Cedar L *Linn* (DP, CJC, BSc). There were no reports from the large reservoirs. Most, and the last report: 26 on 16 May at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO).

Black Tern: First: 11 on 12 May at Port Neal Ponds *Woodbury* (POR). Most: 60 on 18 May at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (RLC) and 60 on 24 May at Banner WA *Warren* (JS). 36 were still in *Fremont* 28 May (KDy).

Common Tern: Both reports were from 18 May: 2 at Lizard L *Pocahontas* (SJD-details) and 4 at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (RLC-details).

Forster's Tern: First: 15 Apr at Jester P *Polk* (JG, AB). Most: 33 on 2 May at Clear L *Cerro Gordo* (RGo). A lone bird 30 May at Eagle L *Hancock* (RGo) was probably a migrant.

Eurasian Collared-Dove: They were reported from thirty-one counties statewide, almost twice as many locations as last spring.

WHITE-WINGED DOVE: One visited the Stephanie Flater residence at John-

ston *Polk* 19 Apr–14 May (*SF, JG-photo, *JB, *DAk, *SJD).

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: First: 8 May at Ledges SP *Boone* (JHW) and 9 May at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (THK).

Black-billed Cuckoo: First: 6 May in the Pattersons' yard *Story* (KLP, SSP) and 9 May *Decatur* (NJM). They were reported from nine additional counties.

Barn Owl: Jeff Livingston observed one a few times the last week of Mar *Decatur* (JRL).

Snowy Owl: One wandered central Iowa in late Mar: 20 Mar at Neal Smith NWR *Jasper* (refuge staff fide KVS), 24 Mar *Warren* (JG-photo, AJ-photo, JS, RIA-photo, PHA, AB), and 8 Apr near Pella *Marion* (BN-photo).

Long-eared Owl: All: 2 on 16 Mar at Lime Cr Nature Center *Cerro Gordo* (PH), 27 Mar at George Wyth SP *Black Hawk* (MWJ), 4–6 Apr *Boone* (LGD), 4 Apr *Decatur* (NJM), and 20 Apr *Fremont* (KDy).

Short-eared Owl: As many as 5 were at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (POR) and 8 at Banner WA *Warren* (JG) in early Mar. One or two were reported until 12 Apr from *Polk*, *Kossuth*, *Hamilton*, *Decatur* and *Fremont* (AB, MCK, KRW, NJM, KDy). A pair at Copp Pr *Kossuth* 18 Apr were territorial at a location where nesting has occurred in the past (MCK). Last: 30 Apr at Wildin Pr *Kossuth* (MCK).

Northern Saw-whet Owl: All: 10 and 17 Mar at Grammer Grove WA *Marshall* (MPr), 17 Mar at George Wyth SP *Black Hawk* (MWJ), 18 Mar *Boone* (LGD), and Heather Hertzell photographed one 21 Mar at Lime Cr Nature Center *Cerro Gordo* (fide PH).

Common Nighthawk: First: 5 May at Norwalk *Warren* (JG) and 6 May at Mason City *Cerro Gordo* (PH).

Chuck-will's-widow: The only report was negative: none were found 17 May at

Waubonsie SP *Fremont* despite determined aural searching (BSc).

Whip-poor-will: First, both on 23 Apr: *Decatur* (JRL, NJM) and 2 at Fairmount Cemetery *Scott* (WMZ). One found 19 May at Stone SP *Woodbury* (SSP) was a treat for attendees of the IOU spring meeting, and still present 26 May (POR).

Chimney Swift: First: 4 on 16 Apr at Centerville *Appanoose* (RLC). Most: 40 on 24 Apr at Ames *Story* (SSP).

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: First: 22 Apr at Ames *Story* (DE-details) [ties second earliest] and 24 Apr *Decatur* (NJM) [ties third earliest].

Red-headed Woodpecker: The 48 reported 3 May *Decatur* (NJM) was more than the total of all other reports combined.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: The first in the north was 27 Mar at L Meyer *Winneshiek* (Larry Reis fide DC). Most: 10 on 6 Apr at Reece P *Hardin* (SJD) and 6 on 7 Apr at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (CJC). Possible nesters were found in *Cherokee* (DB) and *Woodbury* (BFH, KVS, RLC).

Northern Flicker: Tom Lawson counted 117 on 2 Apr while checking bluebird boxes at Voas Nature Center *Dallas*.

Pileated Woodpecker: One at River-ton WA *Fremont* 8 Apr (JG) was outside the usually reported range.

Olive-sided Flycatcher: First: 7 May at Diamond L *Poweshiek* (MPr), followed by 9 May *Winneshiek*, *Boone*, and *Polk* (DC, JHW, JB). Seven other single birds were reported, with the last in *Poweshiek* 30 May (BVa).

Eastern Wood-Pewee: First: 3 May at Stephens SF *Lucas* (AB), followed by 5 May at both DeSoto NWR *Harrison* (SVR) and Sharon Bluffs SP *Appanoose* (RLC).

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: Ten were reported without details in seven counties beginning 12 May at both Grammer Grove

WA *Marshall* (MPr) and Ledges SP *Boone* (DCH). The last was calling 30 May at Pilot Knob SP *Hancock* (RGo).

Acadian Flycatcher: First: 8 May at Amana Woods *Iowa* (CRE) and 9 May at A.A. Call SP *Kossuth* (MCK). They were only reported from five additional counties. Two singing 30 May at Smith WA *Kossuth* were unexpected (MCK).

Alder Flycatcher: The first was calling 14 May *Henry* (RIA, PHA). Four were in *Emmet* by 16 May (PH, MCK). Most: 12 on 23 May at Lime Cr Nature Center *Cerro Gordo* (PH). Last for this report was 30 May at Pilot Knob SP *Hancock* (RGo).

Willow Flycatcher: A singing bird 5 May at Boone *Boone* tied the record early arrival date (SSP-details).

Least Flycatcher: First: 28 Apr at L Ahquabi *Warren* (JG). Most: 15 on 5 May at DeSoto NWR *Harrison* (SVR). Last for this report, but not for the migration: 2 on 31 May at Algona *Kossuth* (MCK).

Empidonax species: One at Woodland Mounds *Warren* 9 Apr appeared to be a record early Least, but the bird was stubbornly silent (POR-details).

Eastern Phoebe: First: 10 Mar *Decatur* (NJM) [second earliest], followed by 11 Mar at Riverton *Fremont* (KDy) and 11 Mar *Johnson* (CRE) [both tie third earliest]. There were reports from eight other counties 12–14 Mar. Eleven were noted 7 Apr at Palisades-Kepler SP *Linn* along 100 yds of the flooded Cedar R (BSc).

Great Crested Flycatcher: First, all 2 May: at Grammer Grove WA *Marshall* (MPr), Ledges SP *Boone* (LGD), and Riverton WA *Fremont* (DAK).

Western Kingbird: First: 3 on 1 May at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (POR). Away from the Iowa west coast, they were only reported from Des Moines and Saylorville Res *Polk* (AB, JG, DTh, JB)

Eastern Kingbird: First: 19 Apr *Ma-haska* (RIA, PHA) [ties third earliest], 3 on 20 Apr *Decatur* (JRL), and 21 Apr in three additional counties.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: All: 28 Apr *Fremont* (KDy-photo), 7 May at Cottonwood RA *Polk* (RES-photo, RIA-photo, PHA, SSP-photo, KLP, JG-photo, CRE), and 10 May *Dallas* (*LMS).

Loggerhead Shrike: There were reports from twenty-one counties south from a *Plymouth*, *Emmet*, *Cerro Gordo*, *Muscatine* line. No one reported more than a single pair.

Northern Shrike: All: 2 Mar *Decatur* (JRL-details), 15 Mar at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (GLV), 15 Mar at Sandpiper RA *Polk* (JG), 16 Mar at Badger Cr RA *Madison* (E&E Armstrong fide DTh), 23 Mar at Aldo Leopold WMA *Bremer* (SJD-photo), and 27 Mar Dunbar Sl *Greene* (RIA-photo, PHA).

White-eyed Vireo: First: 24 Apr at Croton Unit *Lee* (JWR). One or two were also reported from *Jones*, *Wayne*, *Poweshiek*, *Decatur*, *Linn*, *Polk*, *Johnson*, *Grundy*, *Marshall*, and *Hardin*.

Bell's Vireo: First: 1 May at Ledges SP *Boone* (JHW) and 4 on 2 May at Manti P *Fremont* (KDy). They were most commonly reported from the Missouri R region, and found scattered south from *Polk* and *Linn*. Two were found out of normal range at Cardinal M *Winneshiek* 29 May (EB, DC).

Yellow-throated Vireo: First: 29 Apr at both Lake of Three Fires SP *Taylor* (MMi) and *Decatur* (NJM). Most, both 5 May: 8 at Sharon Bluffs SP *Appanoose* (RLC) and 6 at Stephens SF *Lucas* (JG).

Blue-headed Vireo: First: 24 Apr at Waterworks P *Polk* (JB) and at three locations 29 Apr. Most, both 5 May: at Brookside P *Story* (SSP) and 8 at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (CRE). Last, both 27 May: at Brook-

side P *Story* (Jacek Niemiec fide SSP) and at the Capitol Complex *Polk* (BE).

Warbling Vireo: First: 22 Apr at Tool-
esboro *Louisa* (RIC, JG), followed by 24
Apr at three other locations.

Philadelphia Vireo: First: 30 Apr at
Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (THK-details) [sec-
ond earliest]. The next weren't noted un-
til 7 May at both Manti P *Fremont* (KDY)
and Saylorville Res *Polk* (AB). Last, both
27 May: at Squaw Cr P *Linn* (CJC) and at
Brookside P *Story* (JG).

Red-eyed Vireo: First, all 5 May: at
Neal Smith NWR *Jasper* (WO), at Hickory
Hill P *Johnson* (DP), 3 at DeSoto NWR *Har-
rison* (SVR), and at Brookside P *Story* (SSP).
New migrants were still arriving 25 May at
Brookside P (SSP).

BLACK-BILLED MAGPIE: There
were two reports from their usual range in
Plymouth: 2 on 14 Apr on the west side of
Hwy 12 near Westfield (POR), and another
was spotted 19 May on east side of Broken
Kettle Grasslands BCA during a field trip at
the Spring Meeting (m.ob.).

Horned Lark: The Pattersons counted
flocks after the blizzard 5 Mar: 171 *Greene*
and 199 *Boone* (KLP, SSP).

Purple Martin: First: 24 Mar at Co-
rydon *Wayne* (AB). Only groups of 1–3
were reported.

Tree Swallow: There were many early
arrivals again this year: up to 6 on 10 Mar at
LeClaire *Scott* (*WMZ, *DR) [record early],
2 on 11 Mar at Davenport *Scott* (SJD) [sec-
ond earliest], 2 on 13 Mar at Riverton WA
Fremont (LJP, BKP), 13 Mar at Little River
WA *Decatur* (Drake Larson fide SJD), and
25 on 13 Mar at Bakewell's Pond *Allama-
kee* (FL). Flocks of 100–150 were seen in
Fremont, *Woodbury*, and *Pocahontas* (KDY,
POR, SSP).

Northern Rough-winged Swallow:
First: 6 Apr at L&D 14 *Scott* (*DR) [ties

third earliest] and 8 Apr at Lake of Three
Fires SP *Taylor* (JG).

Bank Swallow: First: 26 Apr at Ada
Hayden P *Story* (WO). Most, and the only
large flock reported: 300 on 1 May at a loess
cliff face at Sioux City *Woodbury* (BFH).

Cliff Swallow: First: 23 Apr at Say-
lorville *Polk* (JG). Most, and the only large
flock reported: 600 on 15 May at Ledges SP
Boone (JHW).

Barn Swallow: First: 2 Apr at Ames
Story (SJD), and then not until 17 Apr
in both *Hamilton* (SSP) and 4 *Woodbury*
(POR).

Tufted Titmouse: One at DeSoto NWR
Harrison 5 May (SVR) was resident near the
northern edge of the Tufted Titmouse world
along the Missouri R.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: All: 1 Mar–7
Apr at Sioux City *Woodbury* (GLV), 3 on 13
Apr at Backbone SP *Delaware* (SJD), 15 Apr
at Waterworks P *Polk* (RIC), 23 Apr at Mar-
tin Access *Cherokee* (DB), 29 Apr at Lake of
Three Fires *Taylor* (MMi), 16 May at Yellow
River SF *Allamakee* (DK), and 24 May at
Sioux Center *Sioux* (JVD).

Brown Creeper: Most: 8 on 5 Apr at
Pammel Woods *Story* (LGD) and 12 on
7 Apr *Scott* (POR). Last: 5 May at DeSoto
NWR *Harrison* (SVR) and 9 May along the
Des Moines R *Kossuth* (MCK).

ROCK WREN: One foraged around
a construction site *Montgomery* 1 May, but
wasn't seen again (*DCD).

Carolina Wren: Wrens that overwin-
tered until 1 and 2 Mar Sioux Center *Sioux*
and *Warren* yards were driven off by the
weather and not seen again (JVD, AMJ). But
as a whole, they seemed to survive short-
term winter conditions and were found
in May as far north as Stone SP *Woodbury*
(JHW), A.A. Call SP and Smith WA *Kossuth*
(MCK), and Bloody Run P *Clayton* (DAK).

BEWICK'S WREN: They were found

at two locations this year: the junkyard birds near Argyle *Lee* were first noted 21 Apr (JG), and Eugene Armstrong heard one singing 9 May at his home in *Madison* that stayed until 14 May (RIA-photo, JB-photo, *DAk).

House Wren: First: 10 Apr at L Rathbun *Appanoose* (DT), followed by 2 on 20 Apr at Brown's L *Woodbury* and 2 on 20 Apr *Decatur* (JRL).

Winter Wren: First: 21 Mar at Sioux Center *Sioux* (JVD), followed by 27 Mar at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDY) and 2 on 27 Mar at A.A. Call SP *Kossuth* (MCK). Most: 5 on 14 Apr at Grammer Grove WA *Marshall* (MPR) and 5 on 17 Apr at Smith WA *Kossuth* (MCK). One was still at Lundy Acres *Warren* 6 May (JS).

Sedge Wren: First: a singing bird 23 Apr at Prairie Smoke *Kossuth* (MCK) [second earliest].

Marsh Wren: First: 3 singing 23 Apr at Chichaqua WA *Polk* (SSP). Three north of Guttenberg 29 Apr were only the second sighting of this species in *Clayton* for Danny (DAk).

Golden-crowned Kinglet: First: 4 on 10 Mar at Dean *Appanoose* (RLC). Farther north, the next was at Ada Hayden P *Story* 24 Mar (WO). Most: 25 on 6 Apr at Sunken Grove WA *Pocahontas* (SSP). Last: 28 Apr at New Wine P *Dubuque* (CLW).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: First: 25 Mar *Johnson* (CRE) and 28 Mar *Boone* (RIA, PHA). Most: 46 on 13 Apr *Decatur* (NJM). Last: 15 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP) and 16 May at Squaw Cr P *Linn* (BSc).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: First: 2 on 19 Apr *Decatur* (NJM). Most: 15 on 1 May at Brookside P *Story* (DAk). A singing bird at Oak Grove P *Sioux* 20 May (SSP) could push the summer range far to the northwest.

Veery: First: 4 May *Linn* (DP), followed by sightings in five counties 5 May. About 30 migrants were noted. Six prob-

able nesters were singing 22 May at Backbone SP *Delaware* (BSc).

Gray-cheeked Thrush: First: 1 May at Parker's Woods *Cerro Gordo* (RGo) and 2 May at Grammer Grove WA *Marshall* (MPR). More than a dozen could be heard passing over *Polk* and *Story* during the early morning hours of 7 and 8 May (JB, SSP). Last: 2 at Ames *Story* 26 May (SSP).

Swainson's Thrush: First: 25 Apr at Urbandale *Polk* (BE-details). Early, mid-, and late May peaks were noted: 23 on 6 May at A.A. Call SP *Kossuth* and at least 100 on 6 May on residential lawns at Algona *Kossuth* (both MCK), 62 on 7 May at Grimes *Polk* and 116 on 8 May at Ames *Story* during nocturnal migration (JB, SSP), 42 on 11 May at Squirrel Hollow P *Greene* and 18 on 12 May at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (SJD, CJC), and 24 on 25 May at Brookside P *Story* followed by 38 nocturnal migrants at Ames 26 May (both SSP). One was still at Smith WA *Kossuth* 30 May (MCK).

Hermit Thrush: The first sure migrant: 2 Apr at Rock Valley *Sioux* (JVD). Most: 46 on 6 Apr at Reece P *Hardin* (SJD), 32 on 6 Apr at Wolf Cr RA *Grundy* (SJD), 14 within 100 yds 7 Apr at Palisades-Kepler SP *Linn* (BSc), 20 on 14 Apr at Grammer Grove WA *Marshall* (MPR). Last: 2 at Brookside P *Story* 4–5 May (SSP).

Wood Thrush: First: a singing bird 13 Apr *Decatur* (NJM-details) [record early], then 28 Apr at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (CJC). The next six reports noted first arrivals on 5 May.

Varied Thrush: All: a winter bird at Mason City *Cerro Gordo* that remained until 2 Mar (fide PH), a fem near Sergeant Bluff *Woodbury* 4–10 Mar (POR), and a male at Sioux Center *Sioux* 16–24 Mar (JVD).

Gray Catbird: First: 21 Apr at Hendrickson M *Story* (WO) [third earliest] and 2 on 28 Apr at Dean *Appanoose* (RLC).

Northern Mockingbird: Only reported south from *Polk* and *Johnson*. Most: 12 on 21 May *Decatur* (NJM).

Brown Thrasher: First: 24 Mar *Decatur* (JRL) and 26 Mar at Ledges SP *Boone* (DCH).

American Pipit: First: 12 Mar at Crane Cr Wetlands *Black Hawk* (MWJ) and 7 on 14 Mar at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDY). Most: 150 on 30 Mar *Decatur* (NJM) and 180 on 12 Apr at Chichaqua WA *Polk* (AB). The next largest reports were of 60–70 birds, but most were of single digits. Last: 15 May at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (JLF) and 6 on 15 May *Story* (SSP, KLP).

Blue-winged Warbler: First: 24 Apr at Croton Unit *Lee* (JWR). Most: 12 on 5 May at Stephens SF *Lucas* (JG). Two on 7 May at Brookside P *Story* were the farthest NW (SSP, KLP).

Golden-winged Warbler: First: 4 May at L Macbride *Johnson* (CJC). They were seen at four other locations 5 May, including DeSoto NWR *Harrison* (SVR). Most: 6 on 6 May at Croton Unit *Lee* (SSP, KLP) and 5 on 10 May *Polk* (AB). Not commonly found in the west, one was at Stone SP *Woodbury* 18 May (BFH).

Tennessee Warbler: First: 24 Apr at Donnellson Unit *Lee* (JWR). Most, both 12 May: 40 at Hanging Rock Woods *Johnson* (CJC) and 80 at A.A. Call SP *Kossuth* (MCK). Last: 29 May at Liscomb *Marshall* (MPr).

Orange-crowned Warbler: First: 5 Apr *Polk* (*CLB), then not until 20 Apr at Grimes *Polk* (JB). Most: 14 on 15 May at Squirrel Hollow P *Greene* (SJD). Last: 2 on 16 May at Anderson Pr *Emmet* (PH, MCK).

Nashville Warbler: First: 21 Apr at Nine Eagles SP *Decatur* (JS) and 22 Apr at Banner WA *Warren* (JS). Most: 27 on 5 May *Poweshiek* (BVA) and 20 on 8 May at Amana Woods *Iowa* (CRE). Last: 25 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP).

Northern Parula: First: 21 Apr at both Dean *Appanoose* (RLC) and Des Moines *Polk* (KVS). They appeared at four more locations 22 Apr. Nest building was noted at Croton Unit *Lee* (KVS, CJC). 1–3 late migrants were reported from the west at Stone SP *Woodbury* 15, 16, and 20 May (TLu, GLV, SSP, BFH) and 20 May at Oak Grove P *Sioux* (SJD). Last: 25 May at Parker's Woods *Cerro Gordo* (RGo).

Yellow Warbler: The first were at opposite corners of the state: 29 Apr at both Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDY) and near Guttenberg *Clayton* (DAK). Twenty-nine were counted 5 May on the Spring Bird Count at DeSoto NWR *Harrison* (SVR). Migrants were still being noted 25 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP).

Chestnut-sided Warbler: First: 3 May at Ledges SP *Boone* (JHW), followed by six other locations 5 May. Most: 6 on 8 May at Amana Woods *Iowa* (CRE). Last: 3 on 27 May at Parker's Woods *Cerro Gordo* (RGo).

Magnolia Warbler: First: 5 May *Story*, *Appanoose*, *Jasper*, *Johnson*, and *Poweshiek* (SSP, RLC, WO, CRE, DP, BVA), followed by first arrivals in seven additional counties 6 May (m.ob.). Three were noted 7 May at Manti P *Fremont* (KDY). Most: 6 on 7, 25 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP). Last: 2 on 27 May at Grammer Grove *Marshall* (MPr).

Cape May Warbler: First, all 6 May: 2 at Ames *Story* (SSP), 2 at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (DP), 3 *Decatur* (NJM), at Cottonwood RA *Polk* (KVS), and at A.A. Call SP *Kossuth* (MCK). 1–3 were reported from sixteen additional locations, with the last 3 fems *Emmet* 16 May (MCK, RGo).

Yellow-rumped Warbler: First: 2 on 31 Mar at Lacey-Keosauqua SP *Van Buren* (RLC). The usual flocks were found in Apr, i.e., 40 on 17 Apr at Smith WA *Kossuth* (MCK) and 120 on 22 Apr at Woodpeck-

er M Wayne (RLC); and then again with the warbler fallout in May: 20 on 5 May at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (CRE), 21 on 5 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP), 22 on 6 May in the Pattersons' yard at Ames *Story* (SSP, KLP), and 40 on 7 May at Brookside P (KLP, SSP). Last: 16 May at Tuttle L *Emmet* (MCK).

Black-throated Green Warbler: First: 2 May at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (DP) and 3 on 4 May at L Macbride *Johnson* (CJC). Most: 5 on 7 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP, KLP). Two were at Manti P *Fremont* 7 May (KDY). They were reported from eleven other locations, with the last 2 on 27 May *Poweshiek* (BVa).

Blackburnian Warbler: First: 3 May at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (CJC) and 4 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP), followed by four new locations both 5 and 6 May. Most: 6 on 8 May at Amana Woods *Iowa* (CRE) and 6 on 17 May at Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD). Last: 2 *Poweshiek* (BVa) and 3 at Parker's Woods *Cerro Gordo* (RGo), both 27 May.

Yellow-throated Warbler: First: 2 on 31 Mar at Lacey-Keosauqua SP *Van Buren* (RLC-details) [record early]. Found in nine other counties in their usual range south from a *Boone* to *Clayton* line, with a wayward migrant 10 May at Parker's Woods *Cerro Gordo* (RGo).

Pine Warbler: All: 16 Apr at Jester P *Polk* (AB) and 27 Apr at Pike's Peak SP *Clayton* (*DAK).

Prairie Warbler: There were three different birds this spring: Harsha Jayawardena photographed one 4 May at Mason City *Cerro Gordo*, the 2006 Pleasant Cr RA *Linn* bird was relocated 7 May by Jim Forde and seen by many through the period (*CRE, *DAK, JG-photo), and 14 May at Geode SP *Henry* (RIA-photo, *PHA).

Palm Warbler: First: 6 on 23 Apr at L&D 14 *Scott* (DR) and 4 on 23 Apr *Chero-*

kee (DB). One with all-yellow underparts, a feature of the eastern race *hypochrysea*, was seen 27 Apr at Pike's Peak SP *Clayton* (*DAK). Most: 10 on 7 May at Brookside P *Story* (KLP, SSP). Last: 3 on 16 May *Emmet* (PH, MCK).

Bay-breasted Warbler: First, all 6 May: at Pike's Peak SP *Clayton* (DAK), Donnellson Unit *Lee* (CRE), and West Des Moines *Polk* (KVS). Another 8 singles were reported, with the last 25 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP).

Blackpoll Warbler: First: 27 Apr at L Ahquabi SP *Warren* (AB) and 3 on 4 May at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (CJC). Single location high counts were 9 on 11 May at Dunbar SI *Greene* (SJD), 10 on 15 May at A.A. Call SP *Kossuth* (MCK), and 11 on 25 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP), while 80–100 were found on a 15 May Big Day *Emmet* (PH, RGo, MCK). Last: 28 May *Poweshiek* (BVa).

Cerulean Warbler: First: 3 on 28 Apr at Lacey-Keosauqua SP *Van Buren* (KVS) and 30 Apr at L Macbride *Johnson* (BSc). Singles were noted in seven additional counties with outliers 7 May at Parker's Woods *Cerro Gordo* (RGo) and 15 May Brush Cr Canyon *Fayette* (CRE).

Black-and-white Warbler: First: 31 Mar at Lacey-Keosauqua SP *Van Buren* (RLC-details) [ties record early]. The next wasn't reported until 22 Apr at Woodpecker M Wayne (RLC). Most: 12 on 6 May at A.A. Call SP *Kossuth* (MCK). Last: 2 on 25 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP) and 26 May at Croton Unit *Lee* (KVS).

American Redstart: First: 4 on 2 May at Riverton WA *Fremont* (DAK), and then in five more counties 5 May. Most: 58 on 12 May at Coralville Res *Johnson* (CRE). Last: 18 on 25 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP), and 6 at Parker's Woods *Cerro Gordo* (RGo), 12 in *Poweshiek* (BVa), 4 at Squaw

Cr P Linn (CJC), and 6 at Dudgeon L Benton (CJC), all 27 May, indicate late redstart movement this spring.

Prothonotary Warbler: First: 6 May at Cumming Wetlands Warren (JG) and 7 May at Brookside P Story (SSP-photo). Two at the Frenchtown area Clayton 12 May were a first at that location for Danny (DAk). One to three were also reported from Dallas, Polk, Kossuth, Benton, Des Moines, and Linn (JB, SJD, MCK, CJC, BSc, KVS, RIA, PHA, DP).

Worm-eating Warbler: First: 24 Apr at Croton Unit Lee (JWR). Probable nesters were also found at Donnellson Unit Lee (CRE, BSc), while overmigrants were found 15 May at Brookside P Story (SSP, KLP) and 16 May at Saylorville Res Polk (SJD).

Ovenbird: First: 24 Apr at Croton Unit Lee (JWR). Most: 56 on 5 May at Stephen's SF Lucas (JG). Late migrants were still being noted 24 May at Brookside P Story (SSP).

Northern Waterthrush: First: 21 Apr at Nine Eagles SP Decatur (JS), then on 22 Apr at Squirrel Hollow P Green (RTh), Banner WA Warren (JS), and 3 at Woodpecker M Wayne (RLC). Most: 12 on 6 May at A.A. Call SP Kossuth (MCK) and 11 on 9 May Decatur (NJM). Last: 25 May at both Brookside P Story (SSP) and Algona Kossuth (MCK).

Louisiana Waterthrush: First: 30 Mar at Ledges SP Boone (SJD) and 6 on 31 Mar at Lacey-Keosauqua SP Van Buren (RLC). Northern reports included: 2 May at Grammer Grove Marshall (MPR), 15 May at Skunk R Greenbelt Story (SSP, KLP), 15 May at Brush Cr Canyon Fayette (CRE), and 2 on 20 May at Stone SP Woodbury (CJC).

Kentucky Warbler: First: 24 Apr at Croton Unit Lee (JWR) [ties record early]. They were reported north to Johnson in the east, in central Iowa to Boone and Marshall, and in the west to Woodbury (m.ob.). In

n-cen Iowa, one stopped at Pilot Knob SP Hancock 11 May and Lime Cr Nature Center Cerro Gordo 23 May (both PH).

Connecticut Warbler: The first was a record-early individual 6 May at Cumming Wetlands Warren (*JG). The only other report was 16 May at Hickory Hill P Johnson (JLF).

Mourning Warbler: First: 6 May at both the junkyard near Argyle Lee (CRE, CJC) and Cottonwood RA Polk (KVS). Most: 8 on 17 May at Saylorville Res Polk (SJD). Last, both 28 May: 2 at Lizard Cr WA Webster (MHB) and at Little Wall L Hamilton (MPR).

Common Yellowthroat: First: 22 Apr at Woodpecker M Wayne (RLC). Eleven on 7 May at Brookside P Story is the record high count at that location for Shane (SSP).

Hooded Warbler: First, at likely nesting locations: 27 Apr at L Ahquabi SP Warren (AB) and 6 May at Donnellson Unit Lee (CRE). Single overshooting migrants were seen Cerro Gordo, Dallas, Johnson, Decatur, Winneshiek, Linn, Story, and Page.

Wilson's Warbler: First: 5 May at Buck Cr P Clayton (DAk) and 2 on 5 May at Stephens SP Lucas (JG). Most: 11 on 9 May Decatur (NJM). Last: 3 on 27 May at Parker's Woods Cerro Gordo (RGo).

Canada Warbler: All: 6 May at Croton Unit Lee (CRE, CJC) [record early], 11 May at Pilot Knob SP Hancock (PH), 2 on 17 May Decatur (NJM), 21 May at Parker's Woods Cerro Gordo (RGo), 2 on 24 May at Brookside P Story (SSP), and 24 May at Manti P Fremont (KDY).

Yellow-breasted Chat: First: 2 May at Croton Unit Lee (JLF). From 1–3 were found at fourteen locations in eleven counties south from a Woodbury to Linn line, double the total found in 2006.

Summer Tanager: First: 28 Apr at Lacey-Keosauqua SP Van Buren (KVS) and 29

Apr at Croton Unit *Lee* (DP). A 1st-spring male found singing at Stone SP *Woodbury* 17 May was a bonus for many at the IOU spring meeting (*TLu, POR). Others were found north to *Boone* and *Polk* in central Iowa and *Johnson* in the east.

Scarlet Tanager: First: 29 Apr at Donnellson Unit *Lee* (DP). Uncommon along the Big Sioux R in nw Iowa: at Nelson Tract *Lyon* and 3 at Oak Grove P *Sioux*, both 20 May (SJD, SSP).

WESTERN TANAGER: Two reports this spring: a male 16 May at Ruthven *Palo Alto* (Linda Foerster-photo) and a male 20 May at Oak Grove P *Sioux* (*SJD).

Spotted Towhee: A winter resident remained at Camp Hantesa *Boone* until 16 Mar (JHW). More migrants than usual arrived later: 29 Apr *Clay* (LAS), 2 on 3 May at Camp Hantesa (JHW), 5 May at Ames *Story* (WO), 5 May at DeSoto NWR *Harrison* (SVR), 8 May at Algona *Kossuth* (MCK), 8 May at Oak Ridge *Shelby* (RIA, PHA), and 16 May at Brown's L *Woodbury* (POR). A towhee 20 May at Snyder's Bend *Woodbury* had markings and song with features of both Spotted and Eastern Towhee (PH, MCK-details), and a heavily spotted towhee 20 May at Stone SP also sang atypically for either species (JHW-details).

Eastern Towhee: First: 10 Mar at Burlington *Des Moines* (DP) and 20 Mar *Decatur* (JRL).

American Tree Sparrow: Most: 300 on 17 Mar at Dean *Appanoose* (RLC). Last: 2 on 11 Apr at Sandhill L *Woodbury* (POR).

Chipping Sparrow: First: 28 Mar at Cedar Rapids *Linn* (DLF) and 29 Mar at Camp Hantesa *Boone* (JHW).

Clay-colored Sparrow: First: 21 Apr at Hendrickson M *Story* (WO) and 3 on 22 Apr at Mason City *Cerro Gordo* (RGo). Singles were reported from a dozen other locations. Most: 8 on 4 May at Shenandoah

Page (KDy), 12 on 5 May at DeSoto NWR *Harrison* (SVR), and 10 were the latest *Emmet* 16 May (MCK).

Field Sparrow: First: 24 Mar at Corydon *Wayne* (AB) and 6 on 24 Mar *Decatur* (JRL).

Vesper Sparrow: First: 24 Mar *Decatur* (JRL) and 2 on 24 Mar at Red Feather Pr *Polk* (KVS). While checking roadsides for snowy birds 11 Apr, Steve Dinsmore counted 348 *Wright* and 77 *Hamilton* (SJD).

Lark Sparrow: First: 21 Apr *Van Buren* (JG), and 23 Apr at both Chichaqua WA *Polk* (SSP) and Shenandoah *Page* (KDy). Most: 12 on 5 May at Dean *Appanoose* (RLC). They were found along river valleys in the north to *Lyon*, *O'Brien*, *Kossuth*, and *Mitchell* (SSP, MCK, RGo, CJF).

Savannah Sparrow: First: 18 on 12 Mar *Decatur* (JRL).

Grasshopper Sparrow: First: 9 Apr *Decatur* (NJM-details) [second earliest].

Henslow's Sparrow: First: 2 on 31 Mar at Lacey-Keosauqua SP *Van Buren* (RLC) [second earliest]. They were found in eleven additional counties SE from a *Ringgold* to *Polk* to *Fayette* line. Most: 36 on 5 May at Neal Smith NWR *Jasper* (WO).

Le Conte's Sparrow: All: 28 Apr at Doolittle Pr *Story* (MPr), 29 Apr at River-ton WA *Fremont* (JG), 30 Apr and 9 May at Wildin Pr *Kossuth* (MCK), 4 on 10 May and 2 on 11 May at Snake Cr M *Greene* (TL, SJD), and 12 May at Lower Morse L *Wright* (SSP).

Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow: All: 26 Apr at Kettleson Hogsback *Dickinson* (DCH), 10 May at Snake Cr M *Greene* (TL), and 20 May at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (JS, BFH, TLu).

Fox Sparrow: A few wintered in the southern half of the state, so 10 Mar in *Winnebago* (PH) was likely the first migrant. Peak counts of 35–60 spanned 17 Mar–6

Apr *Appanoose*, *Boone*, *Webster*, *Hardin*, and *Pocahontas* (RLC, LGD, LAS, SJD, SSP). Last: 8 on 16 Apr *Boone* (LGD).

Song Sparrow: Most: 75 were found at South Twin L *Calhoun* and 40 at Sunken Grove WA *Pocahontas*, both 6 Apr (SSP).

Lincoln's Sparrow: First: 8 Apr at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (DP) and 4 on 17 Apr *Decatur* (NJM). Most: 8 on 11 May at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (SJD). Last: 5 on 16 May *Emmet* (PH) and 20 May at Chichaqua WA *Polk* (BE).

Swamp Sparrow: First: 9 Mar *Boone* (JHW).

White-throated Sparrow: Three wintering birds at Ames *Story* were last seen 6 Mar when the snow melted (SSP). The first migrant was reported 19 Mar *Woodbury* (POR). Most: 195 on 23 Apr *Decatur* (NJM). Last: 31 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP).

Harris's Sparrow: A few were found east to Coralville Res *Johnson* 24 Mar (BSc) and Cresco *Howard* 6 May (DC), but most were found to the west: 37 on 4 May *Decatur* (NJM), 34 on 4 May at Shenandoah *Page* (KDy), and 111 on the 5 May Spring Bird Count at DeSoto NWR *Harrison* (SVR). Harris's were the third most numerous bird on the DeSoto count, behind only Common Grackle and Red-winged Blackbird. Last: 19 May at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (BFH, JHW) and 20 May at Oak Grove P *Sioux* (SJD).

White-crowned Sparrow: First: 17 Mar at Hallett's Quarry *Polk* (JB), 17 Mar at Dean *Appanoose*, and 24 Mar at Coralville Res *Johnson* (BSc). Most: 26 on 3 May at Shenandoah *Page* (KDy), 27 on 5 May at DeSoto NWR *Harrison* (SVR), and 23 on 7 May *Decatur* (NJM). Last: 15 May at Ames *Story* (KLP, SSP) and 8 on 16 May *Emmet* (MCK).

Dark-eyed Junco: Most: 400 on 17

Mar at Dean *Appanoose* (RLC), 152 on 6 Apr at Ames *Story* (SSP, KLP), and 300 on 6 Apr at South Twin L *Calhoun* (SSP). Several Oregon Juncos were reported: overwintering until 17 Mar at Ames (SJD), 17 Mar at Sioux Center *Sioux* (JVD), 21 Mar at Algona *Kossuth* (MCK), and 7 Apr at Ames (SSP). Last Slate-colored: 3 May at Sioux Center (JVD) and 9 May *Marshall* (MPr).

Lapland Longspur: 4,650 could be found *Wright* 11 Apr (SJD), but the last 50 were reported only 13 days later *Kossuth* (MCK).

Smith's Longspur: First: 14 Mar *Decatur* (NJM), 11 on 23 Mar *Bremer* (SJD), and 4 on 25 Mar *Kossuth* (MCK). 100 were grounded by snow 11 Apr *Hamilton* (SJD, AB). One or two were found 12 Apr *Benton* (DP), and 14 Apr at both Dewey's Pasture *Palo Alto* and Bishop WPA *Clay* (LAS). Most: 85 on 22 Apr at three locations in *Kossuth* (MCK) and 41 on 29 Apr at Dewey's Pasture (POR, LAS). Last: 13 on 6 May at Chichaqua WA *Polk* (BE) and 3 on 8 May at Pintail WPA *Kossuth* (MCK) [ties record late].

Snow Bunting: All: 12 on 3 Mar *Polk* (AB), 34 on 3 Mar *Dallas* (RIA-photo, PHA), 3 on 6 Mar *Hardin* (MPr), 4 on 9 Mar *Polk* (SJD), and 12 on 17 Mar *Warren* (JG).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: First: 22 Apr at Ventura *Cerro Gordo* (PL) and 23 Apr at Ledges SP *Boone* (JHW).

Blue Grosbeak: First: 18 May *Fremont* (BSc). Several were reported during the IOU spring meeting from *Woodbury* and *Plymouth* (m.ob.). The only ones away from the western border counties were 2 on 28 May at Carroll *Carroll* (RTh).

Indigo Bunting: First: 22 Apr at Woodpecker M *Wayne* (RLC) [second earliest], then 1 May in both *Decatur* (NJM) and at Burr Oak *Winneshiek* (Lee Zieke fide DC).

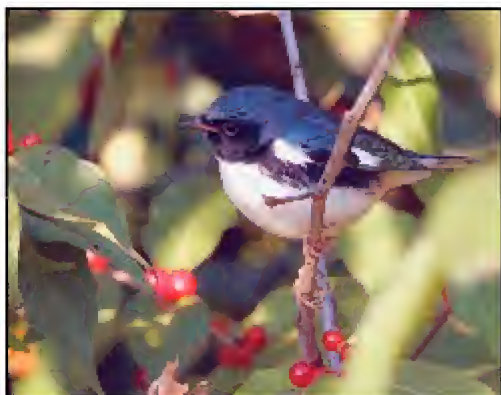
PAINTED BUNTING: The 2006 male

IOU 2007 Photography Contest Winners

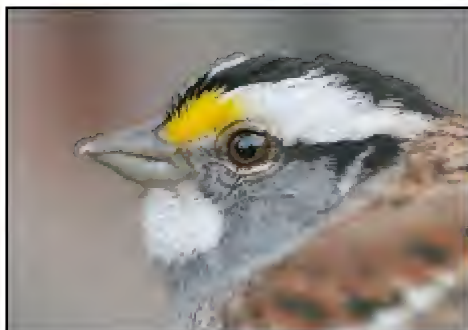
IOU is pleased to present the 2007 photography winners. There were 17 excellent entries that challenged judges Reid Allen, Carol Berrier, and Jay Gilliam.



First Place Winner: Cape May Warbler, Ventura Marsh, Cerro Gordo, 21 May 2006. Photograph by John Bissell, Grimes, IA.



Second Place Winner: Black-throated Blue Warbler, Hickory Hills Park, Tama, 26 October 2006. Photograph by J. Scott Garrett, Waterloo, IA.



Honorable Mention: White-throated Sparrow, West Des Moines, Polk, 1 April 2007. Photograph by Dick Stilwell, West Des Moines, IA.



Third Place Winner: Dickcissel, Madison, 1 June 2005. Photograph by Dick Stilwell, West Des Moines, IA.



Honorable Mention: Marsh Wren, Harrier Marsh, Boone, 10 May 2007. Photograph by Dick Stilwell, West Des Moines, IA.



Honorable Mention: Barred Owls, Parker's Woods, Cerro Gordo, 28 May 2006. Photograph by J. Scott Garrett, Waterloo, IA.



Honorable Mention: Northern Waterthrush, Brookside Park, Ames, Story, 10 May 2006. Photograph by J. Scott Garrett, Waterloo, IA.

Honorable Mention: First photographed Chuck-will's-widow (male) on nest and eggs in Iowa, Old YMCA Camp Arrowhead, Wapello, 7 June 1970 (IBL 40[3]:59–65). Photograph by Darleen and Charles Ayres, Ottumwa, IA.



returned to Brookside P *Story* 8 May and continued through the period (*JB).

Dickcissel: First: 2 May while searching for the Rock Wren *Montgomery* (POR) and 2 on 2 May *Decatur* (NJM). Most: 68 on 18 May *Decatur* (NJM).

Bobolink: First: 3 on 28 Apr *Decatur* (NJM), followed by 29 Apr at both Lake of Three Fires *Taylor* (MMi) and Kellerton Grasslands *BCA Ringgold* (JG). Most: 33 on 6 May *Fremont* (KDY) and 25 on 7 May at Moeckley Pr *Story* (SSP, KLP).

Eastern Meadowlark: First: 10 Mar at Green Bay Bottoms *Lee* (DP) and 2 on 10 Mar at Brenton Arboretum *Dallas* (JB). In the west, one was at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* 25 Mar (POR) and 3 were at Sioux City *Woodbury* 20 May (TLU).

Western Meadowlark: To balance the Eastern Meadowlarks, 3 were at Seven Cities Sod Farm *Scott* 28 Apr (WMZ).

Yellow-headed Blackbird: First: 21 and 26 Mar *Woodbury* (POR, SJD) [ties third earliest]. Forty on 22, 24 Apr at River-ton WA *Fremont* (KDY, LJP, BKP) were flooded out after the 5–7 May rains.

Rusty Blackbird: The first migrants showed up 10 Mar: 2 at Sedan Bottoms *Ap-panoose* (RLC), 7 at Cone M *Louisa* (BSc), 4 at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (CRE), and 25 at Banner WA *Warren* (JG). Most: 115 on 18 Mar at Banner WA (AMJ) and 85 on 23 Mar at Gordon's M *Hamilton* (SSP). Last: 39 on 17 Apr at Harrier M *Boone* (LGD).

Brewer's Blackbird: There were about twenty-five reports, although less than half of those included ID or sexing details to help support what is often a difficult identification. First: 2 on 13 Mar at Sandhill L *Woodbury* (POR). Most reports were of less than 50 birds; however, large flocks gathered at Chichaqua WA *Polk*: 177 on 12 Apr (AB) and 259 on 23 Apr (SSP). Last: 2 on 27 Apr at Polk City WA *Polk* (DK).

Common Grackle: Their absence until after the March blizzard might be notable. Or, perhaps no one cared to report them.

Great-tailed Grackle: A winter flock of 40 roosted near Waterworks P *Polk* until 9 Apr (AB). There were reports from about twenty locations of up to 25 birds as far east as Cardinal M *Winneshiek* 24 Apr (DC) and a second county record at South Sycamore Bottoms *Johnson* 29 Apr until at least 25 May (CJC, MHB, CRE).

Brown-headed Cowbird: See Common Grackle above.

Orchard Oriole: First: 24 Apr in both *Decatur* (NJM-details) and *Lee* (JWR). Most: I considered the 20 or so courting Orchard Orioles I saw 20 May in *Woodbury* notable (MCK), but 26 on 17 May in one tree at Forney L *Fremont* had to be an unforgettable experience (KDY).

Baltimore Oriole: First: 22 Apr at both Ames *Story* (SEM-details) and Woodpecker M *Wayne* (RLC). Thirty-two could be found as early as 30 Apr *Decatur* (NJM). An aberrant male with an entirely orange head was photographed 9 May *Boone* by Barb Clay and Jim Moreland (fide SJD).

Purple Finch: There were reports from twelve locations of 1–4 birds, all from the eastern half of the state except for 8 Mar at Sioux Center *Sioux* (JVD). The only large flock was 20 on 31 Mar at Lacey-Keosauqua SP *Van Buren* (RLC). The last 4 were at Brooklyn *Poweshiek* 30 Apr (MPR).

House Finch: Keith Dyche counted 134 on 1 Mar at Shenandoah *Page*.

Common Redpoll: All: 8 Mar at Hartman Reserve *Black Hawk* (AlB, DP), 16 Mar at Ackley *Hardin* (MPR), 26 Mar at Ventura *Cerro Gordo* (PL), and a surprising flock of 10 on 29 Apr at Armstrong *Emmet* (*Craig Zoellner) [third latest].

Pine Siskin: Up to 20 wintering birds remained at Sioux Center *Sioux* until 5

Apr (JVD). From 1–4 were found *Hardin*, *Clay*, and *Boone* in Mar (MPR, LAS, JHW), *Cerro Gordo*, *Story*, and *Kossuth* in Apr (RGo, SJD, MCK), 9 May at Saylorville *Polk* (AB), and 11 May at Cherokee *Cherokee* (DB).

American Goldfinch: Most: 350 on 28 Apr at Dean *Appanoose* (RLC).

Eurasian Tree Sparrow: 1–5 were reported from *Des Moines*, *Louisa*, *Muscatine*, *Lee*, and *Johnson* (DP, BSc, RIA, PHA, CRE, JG, CJC).

ERRATUM:

Iowa Bird Life 76(3):144. The entry for Purple Martin should read “First: 4 on 5 Apr at Grimes *Polk* (JB) and 4 on 6 Apr in *Warren* (JG). The largest group reported was 9 on 27 Apr at Banner WA *Warren* (RTTr).”

COMMENT

Thank you for taking the time to add to our knowledge base of spring bird movement in Iowa. Over 4,800 bird observations were entered into the database from which this report was compiled—a stunning increase from just a few years ago. The areas of coverage are mostly similar to last year, as would be expected with a similar list of contributors. Five counties (Johnson, Polk, Story, Woodbury, and Boone) listed between 400 and 500 sightings submitted, with a substantial drop-off to the next tier: 100–168 sightings in Fremont, Decatur, Appanoose, Kossuth, Linn, Scott, Warren, Lee, Greene, Cerro Gordo, and Pocahontas. Nineteen counties, mostly in a line through the second tier of counties north of Missouri and curving up into west-central Iowa, had one or no bird sightings reported for the season.

Of the ten days with the most bird reports, half of those were Saturdays. Surprisingly, the Sunday and Saturday of the IOU spring meeting in Sioux City came in at numbers six and eight in the total of submitted sightings. The five busiest days of the spring were the very birdy run of 5–8 May and Saturday 12 May. The favorite day this March, the 10th, was seventh on the list because of the strength of improving weather conditions on a Saturday.

As always, one of the most difficult parts of constructing this report for publication is deciding which sightings of rare, difficult-to-identify, or pushing-the-envelope-of-early/late birds are sufficiently substantiated to be forever in print. Some reports get forwarded to the Records Committee in addition to those that are “required” of them, but most fall to a judgment call by the editor. When receiving bird records from the borderlines of rarity, having more identification detail is much easier to deal with than having less, and it helps prevent hurried confirmation e-mails as we strive to produce as complete and accurate a product as we can before deadline.

CONTRIBUTORS

Danny Akers	DAK	Ankeny	Stephen Lee	SCL	Nashua
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* = documentation only

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Student Special Mention in 2007 IOU Photography Contest: Leucistic Great Blue Heron, Bronson, Woodbury, 28 October 2006. Photograph by Tucker Lutter, Bronson, IA.



American Bittern in Harms' yard, Laurens, Pocahontas, 17 April 2007. Photograph by Pat Harms, Laurens, IA.



American Bittern in breeding display, Polk, 10 May 2007. Photograph by Dick Stilwell, West Des Moines, IA.



Female Black-necked Stilt at the Babcock Access of the Hawkeye Wildlife Area, Johnson, 5 May 2007. Photograph by James Scheib, Iowa City, IA.



Leucistic Lesser Yellowlegs at Moeckly Prairie, Polk, 25 May 2007. Photograph by Jay Gilliam, Norwalk, IA.



Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Saylorville Lake, Polk, 7 May 2007. Photograph by Dick Stillwell, West Des Moines, IA.



Juvenile Glaucous Gull at Lock and Dam 14, Scott, 11 March 2007. Photograph by Jay Gilliam, Norwalk, IA.



Snowy Owl, south of Lake Ahquabi, Warren, 24 March 2007. Photograph by Reid Allen, Des Moines, IA.



Prairie Falcon that was chasing Short-eared Owls at Banner wetlands, Warren, 4 March 2007. Photograph by Jay Gilliam, Norwalk, IA.



Cedar Waxwing, one in flock of 17 in Harms' yard, Laurens, Pocahontas, 1 March 2007. Photograph by Pat Harms, Laurens, IA.



One of three Short-eared Owls being chased by a Prairie Falcon at Banner wetlands, Warren, 4 March 2007. Photograph by Jay Gilliam, Norwalk, IA.



White-winged Dove at Stephanie Flater's feeders for several weeks in Johnston, Polk, 12 May 2007. Photograph by John Bissell, Grimes, IA.



Bewick's Wren building nest in Armstrongs' birdbox, Van Meter, Madison, 12 May 2007. Photograph by John Bissell, Grimes, IA.



Hermit Thrush, Hardin, 6 April 2007. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA.



Smith's Longspur, north of Jewell, Hamilton, 11 April 2007. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA.



Snow Bunting in Allens' yard, Dallas, 2 March 2007. Photograph by Reid Allen, Des Moines, IA.



Horned Lark in Allens' yard, Dallas, 2 March 2007. Photograph by Reid Allen, Des Moines, IA.



Lapland Longspur in Allens' yard, Dallas, 3 March 2007. Photograph by Reid Allen, Des Moines, IA.



Black-billed Cuckoo at South Sycamore Bottoms, Johnson, 25 May 2007. Photograph by Mark Brown, Iowa City.



Eurasian Tree Sparrow in Montrose, Lee, 22 April 2007. Photograph by Jay Gilliam, Norwalk, IA.

Report of the Records Committee for 2006

Ann M. Johnson

The recent trend of adding new species to the state checklist continued in 2006. For the second year in a row, three new species were added: Brambling (#414), Mottled Duck (#415), and Red-breasted Sapsucker (#416). With the proliferation of digital cameras, it has been gratifying to have diagnostic photos of these new species as well as many other photos to supplement written documentations. Half of the records reviewed in 2006 were accompanied by photos. A total of 66 new reports, many which included multiple documentations, as well as five old reports were reviewed during the year. Many other documentations were reviewed by the seasonal field reports editors for supporting evidence of reported observations. The committee thanks everyone for timely submission of reports so that our publications offer the most current information available on Iowa avian populations.

Committee members for 2006 with years in which their terms expire were: Lee Schoenewe (2006), Mike Overton (2007), Aaron Brees (2008), Matt Kenne (2009), Paul Hertzell (2010), Stephen J. Dinsmore (2011), and Ann M. Johnson (secretary, appointed by the committee). Rita Goranson was nominated by the committee at its annual meeting and subsequently appointed by the board of directors to fill a regular term beginning in 2007.

The following status changes were approved by the committee at its annual meeting on 5 November 2006: Ferruginous Hawk, casual to regular; Black-headed Gull, casual to regular; Little Gull, accidental to casual; Rufous Hummingbird, casual to accidental; Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, casual to regular; Sprague's Pipit, accidental to casual; and Bewick's Wren, regular to casual. It should be noted that, although Ferruginous Hawk and Black-headed Gull have become regular in the state, this status is based on regular and specific locations. Reports of the gull seen away from the Spirit Lake area and all Ferruginous Hawk records should still include documentation or detailed notes to be considered for inclusion in the published literature. While it is generally accepted that Rufous Hummingbird passes through the state each year, the details available to prove an actual identity beyond the *Selasphorus* genus level are lacking. Photos, especially of the spread tail, will help us determine the actual status of this species in the state.

Each record reviewed by the Records Committee is assigned a six-digit number (year and sequence number) that is included in this report for future reference. Records are classified as follows: A = Accepted (-S = specimen, -P = photograph, -R = recording, -D = documentation) and NA = Not Accepted. To be accepted, a record must receive seven votes on the initial review or six votes on a subsequent review. The subcategories A-S, A-P, and A-R indicate that physical evidence supports the identification, and records are subclassified based on a majority vote. References to *IBL* are the page of the field reports or a special note in *Iowa Bird Life* where the record is cited. P- numbers refer to the IOU Photo File entry number. Published notes and previous citations may contain more details. An * indicates a previously uncited documentation.

2006 RECORDS ACCEPTED

Brant: 14 Jan at Pool 19, Mississippi R *Lee* (2006-14, *IBL* 76:88) and 10 to 14 Oct at Dickens Pit *Clay* (2006-48, P-1099, *IBL* 77:10).

Mottled Duck: 7 to 11 Jul at Jester P *Polk* (2006-31, P-1085, *IBL* 76:194 [Dinsmore and Brees 2007]).

Garganey: 7 Apr at New Lake *Woodbury* (2006-13, P-1076, *IBL* 76:136).

Red-throated Loon: 16 Jun at Port Neal *Woodbury* (2006-30, P-1084, *IBL* 76:195).

Anhinga: 6 Nov at Hitchcock NC *Pottawattamie* (2006-53, *IBL* 77:13).

Ferruginous Hawk: 17 Oct at Hitchcock NC *Pottawattamie* (2006-50, *IBL* 77:15).

King Rail: 18 Aug at Polk City WA *Polk* (2006-62, *IBL* 77:15).

Snowy Plover: 10 to 11 May at Rathbun Res *Appanoose* (2006-25, *IBL* 76:139).

Whimbrel: 9 May at Rathbun Res *Appanoose* (2006-24, P-1082, *IBL* 76:140).

Red Knot: 10 Aug at Pinchey Bottoms *Marion* (2006-34, P-1088, *IBL* 77:17).

Curlew Sandpiper: 12 May at Big Wall L *Wright* (2006-26, P-1083, *IBL* 76:141).

Ruff: 31 Jul to 2 Aug at Pinchey Bottoms *Marion* (2006-33, P-1087, *IBL* 76:199, 77:18).

Red Phalarope: 13 to 16 Sep at Union Slough NWR *Kossuth* (2006-44, P-1096, *IBL* 77:18) and 14 Oct at Rathbun Res *Appanoose* (2006-52, *IBL* 77:18).

Laughing Gull: 25 Jul at Red Rock Res *Marion* (2006-35, P-1089, *IBL* 76:199); 22 Aug at Saylorville Res *Polk* (2006-39, P-1092, *IBL* 77:18); and 8 to 27 Sep at Red Rock Res *Marion* (2006-41, P-1094, *IBL* 77:18).

Little Gull: 11 Oct at Rathbun Res *Appanoose* (2006-51, *IBL* 77:18).

Black-headed Gull: 1 April at Pool 9, Mississippi R *Allamakee* (2006-10, *IBL* 76:142) and 4 Aug to 13 Oct at Spirit L *Dickinson* (2006-46, P-1097, *IBL* 77:18).

Mew Gull: 24 Sep to 2 Oct at Red Rock Res *Marion* (2006-47, P-1098, *IBL* 77:18).

California Gull: 2 Mar at Saylorville Res *Polk*, (2006-12, *IBL* 76:142).

Iceland Gull: 26 Feb to 3 Mar at Davenport *Scott* (2006-04, P-1072, *IBL* 76:92, 142); 2 to 3 Mar at Davenport *Scott* (2006-07, P-1073, *IBL* 76:92, 142); and 8 Mar at L&D 15 *Scott* (2006-15, P-1077, *IBL* 76:92, 142).

Slaty-backed Gull: 16 to 25 Dec at L Manawa *Pottawattamie* (2006-63, P-1101, *IBL* 77:68 [Padelford, Padelford, and Sonderman 2007]).

Great Black-backed Gull: 1 Jan at Davenport *Scott* (2006-01, *IBL* 76:92); 3 Mar at Davenport *Scott* (2006-05, *IBL* 76:142); 3 Mar at L&D 15 *Scott* (2006-11, *IBL* 76:142); and 8 Mar at L&D 15 *Scott* (2006-16, P-1078, *IBL* 76:142).

White-winged Dove: 1 to 10 Jun at Swaledale *Cerro Gordo* (2006-38, P-1091, *IBL* 76:200).

Burrowing Owl: 7 Sep to 9 Oct at Seven Cities Sod Farm *Scott* (2006-40, P-1093, *IBL* 77:19 [Zuurdeeg 2007]).

Green Violet-ear: 14 to 19 Sep at Sioux City *Woodbury* (2006-43, P-1095, *IBL* 77:20 [Huser and Probst 2007]).

Red-breasted Sapsucker: 6 Dec at Council Bluffs *Pottawattamie* (2006-60, P-1100, *IBL* 77:69).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: 29 Jul at Chichaqua Wetlands *Polk* (2006-32, P-1086, *IBL* 76:201), 13 Sep at Smith L Co P *Kossuth* (2006-45, *IBL* 77:21) and 2 Oct at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (2006-55, *IBL* 77:21).

Sprague's Pipit: 22 Apr near Percival *Fremont* (2006-17, P-1079, *IBL* 76:146 [Dinsmore, Brees, and Gilliam 2006]), 14 Oct at Larry Wilson WPA *Clay* (2006-49, *IBL* 77:23) and 3 Oct at Kellerton WA *Ringgold* (2006-58, *IBL* 77:23).

Yellow-rumped [Audubon's] Warbler: 15 May at Nine Eagles SP *Decatur* (2006-27, *IBL* 76:146).

Prairie Warbler: 20 May to 11 Jul at Pleasant Creek RA *Benton* (2006-36, P-1090, *IBL* 76:147, 203) and 7 Jun at Shimek SF *Lee* (2006-37, *IBL* 76:203).

Painted Bunting: 7 May to 31 Jul at Ames *Story* (2006-22, P-1081, *IBL* 76:150,205 [Patterson 2006]).

Brambling: 1 to 21 Jan near Cedar Rapids *Linn* (2006-09, P-1075, *IBL* 76:95 [Scheible 2006]).

Hoary Redpoll: 16 Dec to 19 Feb 2007 at Brenton Arboretum *Dallas* (2006-64, P-1102, *IBL* 77:72 [Lawson 2007]).

2006 RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED

Brant: A report by a waterfowl hunter of a large number of individuals was quite possibly correct but scant details precluded acceptance (*IBL* 77:10).

Sharp-tailed Grouse: The brief description was not conclusive for some members; others believed it was probably escaped from a game farm since it was observed far from sharp-tailed habitat.

Yellow-billed Loon: The descriptions of a bird seen at a distance were determined to be inconclusive. Distant Common Loons, especially when seen in less than optimal lighting conditions, can appear to have light-colored bills. Red-throated Loon, subsequently seen in the same general area, was ruled out based on size, which is very difficult to judge at a distance.

Black Vulture: A brief view that did not allow observation of a few key details left this one as probable only.

White-tailed Kite: A few inconsistencies in the description led the committee to a conservative approach to this potential state record. Some day we will get a photo of this species that has been reported but never accepted in Iowa.

Ferruginous Hawk: A few details conflicted with any age of Ferruginous Hawk and members felt the bird may well have been a Krider's Red-tailed Hawk.

Whooping Crane: One report lacked enough details to be certain of the species, while two others were not accepted because they were being tracked as a part of the reintroduced population from Wisconsin. The fact that Whooping Cranes are once again being seen in Iowa, however, is very exciting news (*IBL* 76:139, *IBL* 77:16, P-1080).

American Woodcock: A more likely Wilson's Snipe was not considered and the description was too brief to eliminate that as a contender for this winter report (*IBL* 76:92).

Yellow-legged Gull: For a species that is relatively new to North America and not an easy identification, more details as well as photos are probably necessary for acceptance.

Iceland Gull: On a split vote, committee members felt that there were not enough details in the photographs to separate this bird from a worn and faded Thayer's Gull (*IBL* 76:92, P-1071).

Barn Owl: While some of the description was very suggestive of this species, it was felt that the more likely Short-eared Owl could not be completely ruled out.

Northern Waterthrush: The extremely early date as well as probable territorial behavior indicates that this was more likely a Louisiana Waterthrush.

Lazuli Bunting: The light conditions and brief details generated too much doubt about this being a pure Lazuli and not a hybrid.

Evening Grosbeak: A record late date of a species that has almost disappeared from the state led members to want more detail. One member felt that the description better matched Hawfinch, a European bird which has been found wandering the Midwest [see European Goldfinch below].

Lark Sparrow: On a split vote, this late bird seen on a CBC was lacking some detail for acceptance.

Lark Bunting: Although parts of the description were suggestive, some of the details did not match a wintering bird of this species (*IBL* 76:94).

Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow: A report of an extremely late fall migrant was thought by some to have more likely been a LeConte's Sparrow.

European Goldfinch: This bird was photographed but determined to most likely be from an escaped collection of caged birds wandering the Midwest in recent years (P-1074).

OLD RECORDS REVIEWED FOR THE FIRST TIME AND ACCEPTED

Whooping Crane: A specimen found at the Ohio State Museum of Biological Diversity was labeled as taken from near Algona in *Kossuth* on 7 Sep 1888 by T.C. Fox (2006-AA, P-1103).

Swallow-tailed Kite: A partial female skeleton (skin had been destroyed) in the Smithsonian Institution was collected by Captain John Feilner near Sioux City in *Woodbury* on 5 May 1864 for the earliest recorded date in Iowa (2006-AC).

Hudsonian Godwit: A male specimen in the Smithsonian Institution was collected by Captain John Feilner near Sioux City in *Woodbury* on 17 May 1864 for the earliest recorded date in Iowa (2006-AE).

Cerulean Warbler: A male specimen in the Smithsonian Institution was collected by Captain John Feilner near Sioux City in *Woodbury* on 1 May 1864 for the earliest recorded date in Iowa (2006-AF).

OLD RECORDS REVIEWED FOR THE FIRST TIME AND NOT ACCEPTED

Gyr Falcon: A photo found by the original observer of Iowa's first Gyr Falcon record would have created a new first record date, but the committee was split on whether the grainy photo ruled out Prairie Falcon (2006-AB, P-1104).

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I thank Paul Hertzel for painstakingly checking all of the inclusive dates against field reports data so that this report is an accurate representation of rare bird sightings in Iowa.

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Red-breasted Sapsucker in Pottawattamie County: First Iowa Record

Andrew Peters and Ann Johnson

Andy Peters, former Iowa birder and currently an artist living in Arizona, thought his visit home would be the normal pleasant time with family and friends. Little did he know that while he was visiting he would set the Iowa birding community on its ear. After lunch on 6 December 2006, Andy stepped outside to enjoy the day and do a little photography. What unfolded was a phenomenal bird for the state of Iowa, or anywhere east of the Pacific Northwest for that matter.

Andy had seen his only previous Red-breasted Sapsucker in Alaska several years ago but was familiar with Yellow-bellied and Red-naped Sapsuckers from the various places he has lived. His story of the Iowa Red-breasted Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus ruber*) (see back cover photos) is told through an artist's eyes.

"After lunch on that day, I stepped out of my painting studio and noticed the sapsucker halfway up a walnut tree on the south side. Weather in the northwest part of the country had been brutal a few days beforehand. He pecked away and fed and moved little and paid me no heed. He moved to a Chinese elm briefly and then back to the walnut. I knew from

the moment I first saw him unaided from 35 yards he was different. He was hunched and slower and darker bodied than the usual Downy, Hairy, or Red-bellied Woodpeckers. He stayed from 25 to 50 feet up and moved at a slower more methodical pace than the familiar local woodpeckers. This attitude was partly what caught my attention to begin with. I watched and photographed while standing below on the drive for 20 minutes before consulting Sibley (2000). I thought he was a Red-breasted Sapsucker from the start but knew that excess red pigment could occur in sapsuckers. I was mostly content to absorb his rich vermillion hood and marvel in the cryptic flecking of his back. He was an elegant creature. I stayed a half hour and went back indoors. Later, I was pretty astonished at the range maps. Usually there is a record nearby at least. I did not see him again but watched daily.

“Such a beautiful bird! Quiet and preoccupied, he was foraging in the bark of a walnut. I thought little about his rarity until after he was gone. While he was in my binoculars I reveled in his beauty for its own sake: delicate golden puzzle of his back, white lore to cere tuft, delicate white star by the eye, scarlet to vermillion to rose transition from crown to breast, owlsh downy flanks, hard white slash of white on blue-black forewing. There is a kind of deep focus when we are audience to beauty unique, fugitive, and perhaps only once in a lifetime. This beauty is wealth beyond reckoning. When it comes along we are transformed forever. It is the primary value of the moment.”

Red-breasted Sapsucker is a bird of the West Coast, breeding from southeastern Alaska to central California. The line of demarcation for the subspecies is southern Oregon. Wintering birds may be found as far south as the Baja peninsula and a few vagrants find their way into Arizona, Nevada, Idaho, and Utah. There are three records from Texas, two photographed. Reports from other western states have not been confirmed.

The bird was determined to be the northern *ruber* subspecies and just perhaps the weather pattern over the past month contributed to the displacement. The jet stream had been straight out of the northwestern United States/western Canada, tunneling right down into the Midwest. Although it is generally believed that weather has little to do with the movement of a disoriented bird, one has to wonder a bit.

Thanks to Danny Akers for researching the weather patterns leading up to this great discovery and for gathering information on the status of Red-breasted Sapsucker in many western states.

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Glossy Ibis in Polk County

Aaron Brees

On 7 May 2007, I drove up to the Cottonwood Access near Saylorville Reservoir to view a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher found that morning by Dick and Sharon Stillwell. It being a nice day, and feeling a bit lucky after getting to see a new state bird, I decided to continue north to check the Polk City Wildlife Area and Moeckley Prairie for shorebirds.

The Moeckley Prairie area is private land along both sides of NW 188th Avenue to the east of Polk City in northern Polk County. The south part is a large, weedy area that is often flooded in the spring. The north part is a large pasture that contains ponds and low-lying areas that flood as well. This is often a good spring spot for waterfowl, shorebirds, and Cattle Egret, as well as grassland birds.

When I arrived at the area shortly before 1 P.M., I immediately observed a flock of dark ibis on the north side of the road. As I pulled off the road, the flock got up and flew a couple big circles around the area, gaining altitude as if to leave. Fortunately, they came back in to land and spent the next three hours feeding and sleeping in the flooded pasture.

When the birds landed, it was immediately obvious that they were not White-faced Ibis in alternate plumage as would be expected in May in Iowa. The birds all lacked the wide, bright white feathering around the bill and eyes that White-faced Ibis show, and which can be seen even with the naked eye at quite a distance. The birds were clearly either Glossy Ibis or basic plumaged White-faced Ibis. After scoping the birds, I could see that all seven were adults due to their solidly dark, glossy plumage including the head and neck. All appeared to have dark, as opposed to red, eyes. They also had narrow but bold white lines running from the bill base to above and below the eyes, bordering the lores, which were strongly tinted pale blue. These features were all consistent with Glossy Ibis, but the possibility of a flock of seven just seemed almost unbelievable to me.

I called Jay Gilliam, hoping he could get away from work to see the birds and help get diagnostic photos. I then was able to contact Shane Patterson who kindly helped review additional field marks until I was more confident with the identification. After Jay arrived and agreed with the identification, we began contacting as many local birders as we could. Fortunately, the birds stayed around for the next few hours to be viewed by many observers. Interestingly, Scott Rolles and Pam and Reid Allen, who all saw the birds in the afternoon, had been by this spot in the morning and the birds were not present. The ibis were seen the following morning in a flooded field about one mile east of Moeckley, but quickly departed. A short time later they were reported to the northeast near Errington Marsh, but again immediately departed. It is interesting to speculate as to where these birds may have gone after leaving central Iowa: a few days later a flock of seven ibis, identified by the observer as glossies, was reported, but not documented, in northeast Iowa, and in mid-June, a flock of seven Glossy Ibis was reported from Horicon Marsh in eastern Wisconsin.

This flock of seven Glossy Ibis represents the third Iowa record and the first for Polk



Figure 1. Seven Glossy Ibis, Saylorville Reservoir, Polk, 7 May 2007. Photograph by Aaron Brees, Des Moines, IA.

County. The previous records were from 4–5 May 1992 in Kossuth County (Kenne 1994) and 18–22 May 1995 in Fremont County (Kent, Fuller, and Tetrault 1995). The previous high count for Iowa had been two, and I am not aware of any other similarly large flocks having been found in the Midwest other than the flock of seven reported from Wisconsin this summer.

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Harlequin Ducks in Scott County

Don Robinson

An unusually warm winter turned frigid with an “Alberta Clipper” passing over the Quad-Cities in late January. Subzero nights lasted well into February, and the Mississippi River was frozen beyond recent memory. Bald Eagles concentrated over the remaining open water, and photographers likewise converged on Lock & Dam 14 between Bettendorf and LeClaire, Iowa. On 9 February, Stan Bousson of Moline, Illinois, was watching for photo opportunities from the parking lot below the locks. A pair of “small dark ducks” flew up from the middle of the river and landed in the cove between the parking lot and the island between the two locks.

Unlike many eagle watchers, Stan has broad birding experience, and knew that these ducks might be special. Using his telephoto lens for a scope, he identified the pair as rare Harlequin Ducks (*Histrionicus histrionicus*) (Figure 1 and front cover photo). Stan reported his discovery to the Army Corps of Engineers at the Mississippi River Visitor Center (who manage the Smith’s Island Recreation Area and the area around Lock and Dam 14). After the message bounced around it was picked up by Al Frohlich, former Natural Resource Specialist for the USACE, Rock Island District, Mississippi River Project. Although he was out-of-town at the time, Al posted the sighting in the IA-Bird listserv the following Monday, 12 January.

Through an odd twist of fate, it was the same Al Frohlich who first reported the only other harlequin sighting in the Quad-Cities Area, a female in 2004. That bird was seen by many from Butterworth Park on the Illinois side of the Mississippi River. It was documented by Al Frohlich, Tom Kent, and Danny Akers that the harlequins made brief forays from Illinois to Iowa. Other accepted Iowa reports are limited to one by Aaron Brees (2004) at Saylorsville, and two specimens taken in Polk County in December 1932 and October 1976 (Kent and Dinsmore 1996). All these were single birds of female/immature plumage.

Picking up Al’s post after work, I hurried down to the river. It was an anxious moment as I entered the parking lot, (a little ironic, given how this event played out). A man was standing by the railing with a huge lens pointing down at the water. A good sign! Most photographers have their backs to the river, looking up into the trees where the eagles roost. He indicated an ice shelf (about 25 feet out), where two small ducks were standing with their bills tucked in over the shoulders. Even so, it was immediately clear that these were indeed the harlequins. The white arcs and round spot were visible on the part of the face still showing, and on the neck/breast area as well. One of the ducks showed rufous color on the flank.

Upon introducing ourselves, I found that this was Stan Bousson, who had made the original find. As the evening light began to fade, Stan and I talked about his discovery and my limited past history with harlequins (the afore mentioned female at Butterworth Park, and a male at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan in 1978).

Finally, the harlequins woke up and stepped into the water to dive for small fish.



Figure 1. Two Harlequin Ducks, Lock and Dam 14, Scott, 10 March 2007. Photograph by Ann Johnson, Norwalk, IA.

Canada Geese, Mallards, and a few scaup were up in the cove as well. The geese chased the harlequins whenever they caught fish, often successfully making the harlequins drop their prize. The harlequins were catching many fish, however, and it seemed that there were enough to go around. Stan took flash assisted pictures as darkness came on. We exchanged e-mail addresses, and I posted the “confirmation” of the pair and the exact location to IA-Bird listserv upon arrival home.

Each day thereafter the number of birders grew. I was stopping by before work, at lunch hour, or after work each day for several weeks, and almost always ran into IA-Bird listserv members. The harlequins might disappear for a few hours at a time, but they were pretty reliable in the evening. Chris Caster from the Iowa City area led a gull-watching field trip to the Quad-cities, and they were blessed with the harlequins as a bonus for the trip.

When not by the parking lot, the pair might be seen near the second lock, and occasionally below the dam on the Illinois side. Outside of this immediate area, the only sighting during the whole extended period was in the first week when Gerald White sighted them briefly from Canal Shore Drive below the I-80 bridge. Many eyes were scouring the shores on both sides of the river during times when the harlequins were missing from “the usual spot,” but their retreat was never discovered.

Early on it was determined that the pair was not “Burt and Roberta”, but rather “Burt and Ernie” (i.e., the supposed female was in fact an immature male). Later, when those with more harlequin experience began to arrive on the scene (including a group on a field trip from Chicago where they are more regular visitors), the focus turned to the colorful

male. This harlequin, although much more advanced, still did not show quite all the adult characters. All the requisite white marks were distinct but the breast feathers were more of a mottled brown than the steel gray that they should have been.

As time went on, birders from farther away became more confident that the pair was going to stay around. I talked to birders from all corners of Iowa and Illinois. A few made repeated trips, but nearly everyone who wanted to see these birds was able to find them. Many were rewarded with exceptional views.

After the ice melted, the eagles were replaced by hundreds of American White Pelicans as a general public attraction. The area also produced a bonanza of ducks for viewing. Impressive numbers of goldeneye, scaup, ring-necked, Canvasback, Redhead, and all three mergansers were present, plus a male Long-tailed Duck played hide and seek around Smith's Island. The three swans were located as well. With all the extra eyes, it was surprising that no scoters were found, as a few usually pass through.

After 56 days, the clock finally ran out on a couple of late hopefuls. Paul Roisen traveled from Sioux City, IA to visit his son's family over the Easter weekend. I scouted the harlequins on Thursday evening (5 April), and the pair was present at 5 p.m. The next morning Paul and I could not relocate them. "Not to worry," we thought, for Paul had three days in the Quad-Cities to patrol the area. Jim Fuller, just back from California, joined the search on Saturday, but they did not reappear. The harlequin's extended visit had come to an end.

For me personally, there was much more to seeing the harlequins than just another rare bird for my Iowa list. They were truly beautiful birds, but I could say that for other ducks. Somehow they were special—they seemed to have "character" with their shiny little eyes looking back from their "clown" masks. Chris Caster commented: "For some reason that was an extremely memorable encounter for me. I will honestly treasure these photos." Over eight weeks and dozens of observations, I wondered: could these unlikely characters really have resulted from a series of chance mutations over the millennia, or were they part of a grand design? Was it art or accident?

A request has been submitted to the Army Corps of Engineers to post a sign in the viewing area to "commemorate" the visit of the harlequins, and the hundreds of birders who came from all over the Midwest to be a part of the "event." It is pending a reply at the time of this writing. Quad-city birders were blessed to be at the center of all the action.

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Birding Northeast Iowa on Highway Nine

Rita Goranson

If you have some extra time while in northeastern Iowa, check out the lesser known but equally satisfying birding spots along Highway 9. This section of highway, particularly from Manly to Cresco, has a number of habitats and centers that offer some choice Iowa vistas and the possibility of seeing exciting birds.

Most of the area around this section of highway, which is in Worth, Mitchell, and Howard Counties, is agricultural land, and at first glance there doesn't seem to be many birds around other than the typical grassland/farmland birds. However, tucked away in river valleys and nestled in the farmlands are some wonderful birding spots that are worth a trip for more desirable birds, especially during migration seasons.

East of Manly, just past the Plymouth blacktop, which is S56, and across the bridge on the right, is the **Shellrock River Wildlife Area (WA)** (Figure 1.1) maintained by the Worth County Conservation Board. It is a primitive area of 128 acres and has, in addition to a prairie area, two ponds, two areas of cedar trees, and the river's edge to make good habitat for shorebirds, rails and bitterns, sparrows, and eagles or hawks soaring overhead in migration. Generally, the ponds evaporate part way by mid-summer creating wonderful mud flats for shorebirds. Buff-breasted Sandpipers have found this area several times. Sora and Virginia Rails are found in the spring along with American Bittern. LeConte's Sparrows along with other sparrows in migration are generally found here, also.

Return to the highway and continue on the road east to 1.5 miles west of Osage, in Mitchell County. This is just before the bridge crossing the Cedar River. At this point on the

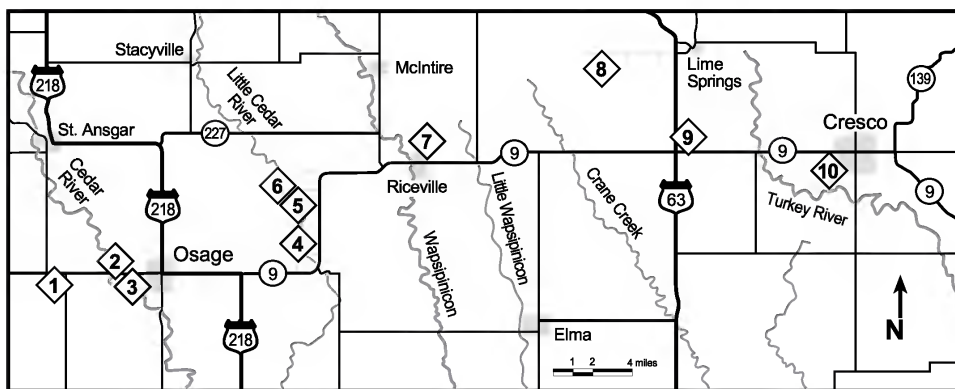


Figure 1. Birding Northeast Iowa on Highway Nine: (1) Shellrock River Wildlife Area. (2) Mitchell County Conservation Headquarters and Nature Center, (3) Spring Park, (4) New Haven Pot Holes, (5) Brownsville Wildlife Area, (6) Pioneer State Park, (7) Lake Hendricks Park, (8) Hayden Prairie, (9) Daniel "Yogi" Mullen Wildlife Area, (10) Vernon Springs Park and Nature Center.

left is the **Mitchell County Conservation Headquarters and Nature Center** (Figure 1.2). This is in conjunction with the L. R. Falk WA, which ties into the Green Belt River Trail.

The Nature Center religiously feeds birds all year round. The Center has an aerated pond for Trumpeter Swans. Woodpeckers, nuthatches, sparrows, and other common birds are found there. Pileated Woodpeckers are heard and seen occasionally in the area. Though the center is small, it offers several nice displays of Iowa wildlife with a display of Iowa bugs and butterflies that local school children put together.

The Green Belt Trail begins at the center and quickly leads to the river where a four-mile roundtrip trail parallels the river, going all the way north to the town of Mitchell and Interstate Park. The trail is a bit rough in some areas, but it is beautiful, and in spring and fall could produce any of the warblers found in any other part of the state. Thrushes, towhees, hawks, herons, and other birds provide lots of activity along the trail. Half way to Mitchell on 370th Street there is an exit if one chooses not to go the whole route, or as an entrance to do only the top half of the trail. At this exit/entrance on 370th there is a nice stand of pines used for shelter by owls in the winter.

Back at the headquarters and across the bridge to the right is the half-mile long road to **Spring Park** (Figure 1.3). The park is along the Cedar River, where camping and restrooms are available. The park gate is open in the spring through fall. Otherwise access is by foot. Warblers, including the Cape May, visit the water at the artisan well in the park. The river's edge allows for viewing occasional shorebirds, eagles, and hawks, and the ducks that use the river. Here, also, a Pileated Woodpecker is occasionally seen. At the entrance to the park is the Harry Cook Nature Trail that winds its way into Osage, a two-mile round trip hike. Though this trail doesn't follow the river, it offers a lovely walk and great birding habitat.

Leave Spring Park and return to Highway 9. Across the highway is the River Road, which meanders along the river to Mitchell. On this side of the river, eagles are seen during the winter, and a pair has nested in summer along the river the last few years.

Continuing east on Highway 9, the **New Haven Pot Holes** (Figure 1.4) in Mitchell County are the next stop. The pot holes are surrounded by a wooded area of 168 acres that make up most of the park and a wonderful habitat for woodland birds. Take a left turn off the highway just before the Little Cedar River Bridge onto Shadow Avenue, which goes to the park. It is a one-mile jaunt. The park is a primitive area with a quarter-mile hike to the east to the potholes. At the further-most potholes, there is a raised platform to view the water and the marshy area around the water. Northern Waterthrush, Common Yellowthroat, and other warblers can be found here in spring. In dry seasons the ponds dry up by late summer. The park has mostly mixed deciduous trees, but there is an area of pines to the north that has been used by owls, especially Long-eared and Great Horned Owls, in the past.

A mile north of this park, continuing on Shadow Avenue, is the **Brownsville WA** (Figure 1.5). There is a narrow dirt road that goes down to the river area. This could be good for warblers, sparrows, and grassland birds because the area has 190 acres of timber, marsh, and grassland with walk-in access.

Even further north on Shadow Avenue is **Pioneer State Park** (Figure 1.6). The twenty acres of timber regularly has turkey, woodpeckers, and lots of birds in migration.

Return south to Highway 9 and go across the Little Cedar River where there are five acres to the north of the bridge that is a public area, and there is a park just south of the bridge called Francis Park. It is a nice shady spot for warblers.

At Riceville, toward the west end, is a sign indicating that taking Addison Avenue off of the Main Street will lead to **Lake Hendricks Park** (Figure 1.7) run by the Howard County Conservation Board. Just before the park is the trailhead of the WAPSI Great Western Trailhead Bike Trail. The trail is a 10.5-mile trail to the northwest; however, there is a loop back at five miles. This trail combined with the park gives access to prime birding in Howard County.

The lake itself is deep enough to have a few ducks and a loon or two in the spring and fall, along with regular geese and puddle ducks. Pine trees in the area protect Great Horned Owls and other owls in the winter. There are several trails to walk to see thrushes and warblers in the park.

In Howard County, east of Riceville about seven miles and then north five miles on Jade Street is **Hayden Prairie** (Figure 1.8). This is 240 acres of native prairie that resembles Iowa of 150 years ago. The prairie has 130 species of wildflowers and attracts many grassland and prairie birds including Bobolink, Dickcissel, Northern Harrier, and others. It is a beautiful spot in Iowa!

Just east of Davis Corners, which is the intersection of Highways 9 and 63, is the **Daniel “Yogi” Mullen WA** (Figure 1.9). It is 240 acres along the branch of the Turkey River which is a primitive grassland and river corridor and holds many possibilities for birds. The drawback is that access is by walking only. Another drawback is that it is heavily used in any hunting season.

And finally, but certainly not least, is the **Vernon Springs Park and Nature Center** (Figure 1.10) south of Cresco. This area of 64 acres is next door to Cardinal Marsh of Winnebago County and offers a variety of birding habitats. It is two miles south of Cresco and begins with the Nature Center by the Turkey River, which has several nice displays of wildlife that is being added to yearly. At the park there is a dam and a pond that attracts ducks and cormorants in migration. The timber hosts turkey, and occasionally Ruffed Grouse. Pileated Woodpecker is heard regularly in the woods. Warblers tumble over themselves along the timbered ridges in spring and fall and then sip water at the edges of the river. There is a hiking trail along the limestone bluffs.

There are surprises waiting for the birder who has the time to bird northeastern Iowa. These are only a few of the areas of natural beauty that attract birds and wildlife in this region. Certainly it is worth a trip during spring and fall migration.

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Fifty Years Ago in Iowa Bird Life

James J. Dinsmore

The lead article in the September 1957 *Iowa Bird Life* featured two long-time IOU members from Sioux City. Author William Youngworth described several field experiences he had with T. C. Stephens, former faculty member at Morningside College. These included a 10-week field trip to western states that Stephens led in 1927 with Youngworth along as one of the students and a near-violent encounter Youngworth and Stephens had with a mob that was guarding roads to prevent farm products from reaching Sioux City in the 1930s. Travel and birding were clearly much different from our current patterns.

In another article, former IOU President Ed Kozicky described using a rather tedious method that had been devised to try to estimate August populations of Northern Bobwhite. Although the method has long been abandoned, Kozicky's results did suggest a steady decline in quail populations from 1939 to 1953, perhaps a prelude to the species' continuing population decline.

Among the notes, Woodward Brown described finding a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron nest in Des Moines near where the species had nested in 1956. In another, Harold Burgess, former manager of Union Slough National Wildlife Refuge (and now, in his mid-90s, still volunteering at Santa Ana NWR in Texas!), described seeing Western Grebes courting at the refuge in late May.

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ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES (renewable yearly): Fledgling (students) \$15, Institutional \$20, Goldfinch \$20, Bluebird \$35, Oriole \$50, Egret \$75, Osprey \$100, Bald Eagle \$250, and Peregrine Falcon \$500+. Membership dues entitle members to receive *Iowa Bird Life* and *IOU News* quarterly and to vote and hold office in the Union. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Manage your membership on-line at <www.iowabirds.org> or send new subscriptions and memberships, back issue requests, or address changes to Douglas Hunt, 1201 High Ave., West, Oskaloosa, IA 52577 (iou@mahaska.org). Renewals may be sent to the IOU Treasurer (see inside front cover).

INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS: Original manuscripts, notes, letters (indicate if for publication), editorials, and other material relating to birds in Iowa should be sent by e-mail attachment in Microsoft Word to editor. Research manuscripts should include abstract, introduction, study area, methods, results, discussion, and literature cited sections and will be sent for peer review. Accepted manuscripts will be published promptly depending on space available.

Photos and graphics: Submit only original, unsized, and unenhanced photos in your camera's JPEG (*.jpg) format. Photos must be 300 dpi at the size they will be printed (6-1/8" wide by 6-1/8" high for the cover and various smaller sizes inside), so setting your camera to its highest possible resolution is recommended. The editor will do any resizing and enhancing required because any previous adjustments to the photos may make them unusable. Submit photos and graphics as e-mail attachments.

E-mail all material other than seasonal reports to editor at Kay@KayNiyo.com. Deadlines for submission are **January 1 for winter issue** (Vol. xx[1]), **April 1 for spring issue** [2], **July 1 for summer issue** [3], **October 1 for fall issue** [4]. Send seasonal field reports to field reports editors by deadlines listed on inside front cover.

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CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT: Deadline for receipt of reports is 15 January. For forms and instructions, contact Christopher J. Caster, 4 South Ridge Ct., Coralville, IA 52241 (cjcaster@earthlink.net).

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UPCOMING MEETINGS OF THE IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION: Fall 2007: 26–28 October, Ankeny; Spring 2008: 25–27 April, Oskaloosa

FRONT COVER PHOTO: Harlequin Duck, one of two at Lock and Dam 14, Scott, 9 February–5 April 2007. Photograph by Stan Bousson, Moline, IL. See article in this issue.

BACK COVER PHOTO: First Iowa record Red-breasted Sapsucker (montage) from *Pottawattamie*, 6 December 2006. Photographs by Andrew Peters, Cave Creek, AZ. See article in this issue.

DESIGN: Marshall Desktop Publishing Inc., Evergreen, CO

GRAPHICS: Richard Beachler, Boone, IA

PRINTER: The Village Printer, Boulder, CO



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